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ENGLAND'S POLICY

ITS TRADITIONS AND PROBLEMS

BY

LEWIS SERGEANT

AUTHOR OF "NEW GREECE," ETC.



EDINBURGH

MACNIVEN AND WALLACE

1881

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EDINBURGH
MACNIVEN AND WALLACE



EDINBURGH
MACNIVEN AND WALLACE
1881

THE time is past when an apology would have been thought necessary from one who, neither a minister nor an ambassador, and without the craftsmanship of a specialist, took it in hand to write about foreign policy. There are no sealed books for the student of history; and (in England at any rate) statesmen and diplomatists are now among the first to summon the nation to open council.

A portion of the chapter on 'The European Concert (1880-1)' was written for and circulated by the Greek Committee in the spring of last year. It is embodied here in a slightly modified shape; and the same remark applies to three pages in the tenth chapter, which were originally printed in a more fugitive form.

L. S.

*Burlington Cottage, Turnham Green,
November 1881.*

ERRATUM.—Page 48, 2 lines from bottom, *for* Montagu *read* Montague.

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I.

THE BASES OF POLICY.

It would be instructive if we could recall in succession the more important statesmen who have from age to age controlled the relations of England with the various countries of the world, that we might enquire of them their several ideas on the subject of foreign policy. Divergent methods of attaining the same ends—ends absolutely opposed to each other—this or that State selected as our natural friend or our natural enemy, according to the personal convictions of the speaker or the circumstances of the time in which he lived—chicanery and honesty, double-dealing and morality, guile and straight-forwardness alternately held up as the best mode of success : it would be a quaint medley that we should hear from the lips of Walsingham and Cromwell, of Arlington, Ashley, and Danby, of Harley and St John, of Walpole and Chatham and Pitt, of Castlereagh and Canning, of Palmerston, Russell, and the men of our own generation.

The variety of opinions would indeed be no matter for surprise. So long as it extended only to the aims thought natural and necessary by English statesmen, to definitions of the relative patriotism of various epochs, and to the details of foreign policy as interpreted by different Ministers, it would be entirely reasonable. The wisdom of to-day becomes the folly of to-morrow. The enemy of one age is the ally of the next. Our

fathers poured out millions of money, and the blood of half-a-dozen armies, for an object which we deem either worthless or unattained. If the aims of diplomacy, or mediation, or war, were identical in every period, or even based on the same principles and lines of action, politics might be discussed as an exact science, and the business of a Foreign Office might be learned out of a primer. Whether this is to happen to us or not is a fair question for surmise; but in the meantime we are exposed to the chance of being dragged with every reaction and alternation of party government along diverging paths of policy.

Clearly the lack of a settled policy in our relations with other countries is a main cause of the timidity of moral purpose occasionally displayed by modern statesmen. If the policy were agreed upon, accepted by the nation and its rulers, and plain before the face of every Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, we should not often see a departure from honest and straightforward principles. The more we can reduce our foreign affairs to a system, by settling what we wish to achieve and clinging to our resolution with constant firmness, the sooner shall we be able to rely upon an undeviating course of action on the part of those to whom we entrust the destinies of the empire.

It does not appear to be necessary that we should withdraw the functions of the Foreign Office from the control of rival political parties, or that we should hand over to a permanent Department the responsibility which is now borne in turn by Liberal and Conservative Secretaries and Under-Secretaries. What we really need is the establishment of fixed principles, the stereotyping of our definitions and axioms, and the limitation of the problems which it solely concerns us to solve.

Let all this be determined and registered in the public opinion of the country, and it will be a matter of comparatively slight importance whether Whig or Tory has his hand on the helm. Substitute the laws and formulas of navigation for the caprice, or ignorance, or obstinacy of the captain, and the ship will sail as straight as winds and currents allow.

But it is objected that these winds and currents are perpetually changing; that fresh combinations of circumstances introduce fresh perplexities every year; that problems arise which cannot be solved by stereotyped rules; that we must needs leave to Ministers of the day so much discretion as would carry them, on emergency, to opposite extremes of policy. Given a Bolingbroke and a Walpole, a Castlereagh and a Canning, a Beaconsfield and a Gladstone, and place them in the midst of identical complications, their policy would still be deeply contrasted, or diametrically opposed, however clear the rules which might have been drawn up for their guidance.

It is true to a certain extent, but chiefly because we approach the consideration from our historical English point of view. We do not wish to sink the differences between the genius of one statesman and the genius of another. We cannot afford to reject the astuteness of the clever intriguer because, in the long run, we prefer the moral courage of the internationalist. If we have a dangerous enemy we are glad to find a statesman who can beat him, in any way not absolutely shameful—though we are more proud of the man who can make the danger disappear by open and straightforward means. This is the judgment which we might expect, in nineteen cases out of twenty, from honourable and candid critics who confine themselves to the historical standpoint, and

do not contemplate any change in the conditions by which our foreign affairs have hitherto been limited.

But there is another point of view from which we may approach the subject. Grant that Englishmen must regard English policy as the developed product of English history, and effect no change of method save that which comes by continuous evolution: there is nevertheless a possibility of hastening the process of evolution by dispensing with useless links in the chain. And it may help us to recognise and dispense with such links if we compare with our own the foreign policy of nations which are, like ourselves, on the high road of liberty.

The United States of America, with a constitution not yet a century old, and cut off from the complications which are a source of constant peril to the European Powers, have no elaborate foreign policy. The Monroe doctrine, with the volume of tradition modifying or amplifying it, is the main basis on which the Americans have built their diplomatic system. It is essentially a system of defence, and no American Government has ever crossed the limits first assigned to the development of the Republic, save in the way of welcoming a new State into the Union. The States have never been nationally aggressive. There have been aggressive parties more or less powerfully represented at Washington; but there are no aggressive traditions, because the Government and the common sense of the people at large have always frowned on attempted innovations of this kind. Of course we have heard menaces in regard to Canada. There have been times when it has seemed very probable indeed that we might have to defend the borders of our North American dependency against encroachment from the south. But the danger has never been a real one: it has been brewed for us by

braggart newspapers, by the malice of emigrant Irishmen, or as a counter-irritant to braggadocio on our own side of the Atlantic. The responsible Government has scarcely so much as played it against us in the controversies which were once so frequent between England and the States, but which were happily brought to an end at Geneva. The United States might be glad to receive the Canadians coming to them of their own free will ; but there is no respectable section of the people who would dream of recommending the forcible annexation of the territory.

The people of the United States are in fact anything but an aggressive people, though they are fully resolved at all cost and hazard to hold their borders intact, to exclude foreign nations from the zone of their legitimate influence, and to exact whatever redress or reparation for wrong the principles of international equity may give them. And it is not, as some have urged, the mere geographical position of the country which keeps it from aggression. The Canadian frontier is vulnerable enough, and there are or have been many incitements to an encroaching policy in this direction. Spain has a frontier in Cuba on which Americans have often fixed greedy eyes ; but there has been no approach to aggression upon that island. The case between the States and Mexico, more than a quarter of a century ago, was sufficiently serious ; and when the Government at Washington was permanently in the hands of Southern politicians no doubt the States were more aggressively disposed than they have been since the Civil War. But the great fact to dwell upon is that the people of the Republic, natural-born Americans and naturalised immigrants, are averse from aggressive designs, bent on minding their own business within their own borders,

and devoted to a policy of material and moral self-defence.

It has not been so with every Republic. Rome was aggressive under consuls and cæsars alike. The first French Republic, though trained to love of arms by the unjustifiable attacks of a conspiracy of despots, was also inflamed by the ardour of proselytism, and ultimately fell by aggression. The South American Republics are anarchical simply because they will not rest satisfied with internal development. But the Republic of North America is like none of these ; and it differs from them in two important respects. First, its internal development is so active and rapid that its energies would in any case be exhaustively employed at home ; and secondly, the race-character of the people disposes it against military enterprises abroad. It has not the "imperial instincts" of Rome, bred and nursed to war. It has not the imperial enterprise of the soldier-colonists of Greece. It has not the proselytising spirit of the neo-Latin Republic. It is essentially English : if possible Teutonic-English with the Norman element struck out : and (however explained) it is not aggressive.

If it would not be safe to lay stress on the non-aggressive race-character of the American people, all the more weight may be given to the other argument. It is impossible that a State which is being fed by immigration at the rate of something like half a million every year, and which has superabundant room for this enormous increase, should at the same time be contemplating encroachment on neighbouring territories, or wanton war with any foreign Power. Half a million immigrants imply say five millions sterling of capital—a hundred thousand industrious labourers, wage-earners, tax-payers,

productive citizens. The phenomenon is absolutely without a precedent. The constancy and increasing volume of this stream of organic wealth render it of more value to the United States than all their mines of gold and silver. The busy hive, in which the drones are few and the internecine contests rare, is seething with vigorous life and activity; all haste to be rich, no one shuns labour or remits exertion, a man's capital are his sinews and his strong resolution; every career is open, the Presidency itself is a goal for honest endeavour, spade or tongue or pen is a sword in the hand of our new soldier of fortune. In this mart of industry the poor immigrant breathes more freely than he was wont to breathe in the country that gave him birth. His bowed back straightens, the lines of care are smoothed out of his brow, his eyes look boldly into the eyes of his fellows, he forgets the bitterness that made him an exile, and for the first time treads the earth in all the pride of honourable citizenship. Judge whether such a man would exchange the peaceful and well-requited labour of his new nationality for the wars, the grinding taxation, the still unabolished feudalisms of Europe.

Now we are brought round again to the consideration which led us to seek this comparison between the old world and the new—between the old and the new England. Surely we have something to learn from the child whom we drove out into the wilderness, and who has become a mighty nation. This, if nothing else, seems to be made clear by the history of the United States, that the craving for a foreign policy of adventure, and to some extent the very necessity for a foreign policy, is reduced to a minimum by the accumulation of internal interests, by the regularity of internal development, and by elevating as much as possible the dignity and responsibility of

the citizen. No doubt the circumstances of the two countries are widely different. America has vast tracts waiting for cultivation; England is thronged, if not over-populated. The institutions of America are new and easily adaptable; the institutions of England are old, ingrooved, and scarcely to be modified without a revolutionary effort. America started fair a hundred years ago, and is isolated from the great military nations; England has the traditions and inherited complications of two, or five, or eight centuries, more or less potent over us at the present day. We could not if we would put ourselves in the place of the Republic; and indeed the foreign policy which suffices for the Republic might not satisfy the requirements of an ancient monarchy, situate close to the continent of Europe, and having vulnerable members over the greater part of the globe.

Much is to be said on both sides; but take the parallel as far as it will go, and recognise the significance which it unquestionably possesses. England, though in one sense part of Europe, is still cut off from the Continent by twenty miles of sea, and the political importance of its geographical position is not to be overlooked. Our statesmen have perhaps too often regarded this position as giving us a certain influence or control over European politics, and enabling us to intervene at pleasure without committing ourselves too deeply. There is another aspect of our insularity—it enables us (and has enabled us a hundred times) to shut ourselves out from Continental broils, and to go on our way in peace when a contiguous frontier would almost inevitably have drawn us into war. It is a serious question for Englishmen at the end of the nineteenth century whether they ought not finally to cling to this latter interpretation, and to look upon the twenty miles of sea as absolving

them from the worst extravagances of competitive armament, and from nine-tenths of the old policy of diplomatic intrigue.

This consideration, and others issuing from or co-ordinate with it, claim the most serious attention of English statesmen. The contraction of our responsibilities abroad and the simplification of our foreign policy in the sense just indicated are plainly demanded by the interests and inclinations of Englishmen. Would it not be a legitimate change for us to make at this crisis of our national development? Would it not materially hasten the process of evolution by which our policy is shaped and guided? Might we not in this manner dispense with certain useless links in the chain, as already suggested?

The men of this generation are visibly to all eyes forging the hinge of the great door which opens on a heroic future for England. The people which has within a single decade given so many evidences of a moral courage not hitherto familiar in this country is made for better things than any yet achieved by its ancestors; but the way to these better things is not a mere prolongation of the way heretofore pursued by statesmen and diplomats. It is not the same system which fought to retain the States in 1775-81 and bowed to the Geneva arbitration in 1872. It is not the same system which generated the Crimean War and arrested the quarrel with Russia in 1876-78. It is not the same system which piled up our monstrous Indian Empire and relinquished ill-gotten gains in Afghanistan. It is not the same spirit or the same order of statesmen or the same English public opinion which grasped at petty handfuls of soil in every quarter of the world, paying for them uncounted gold and invaluable English lives, and which in 1881, to the

horror of the war-making classes and the joy of a million peace-loving men, restored the liberties of the Boers.

A change has come over us and a transformation : it behoves us to see it and welcome it, and be in harmony with it. The classes that made war, that fought indubitably well and bravely, profiting some little by promotions and decorations and contracts, will make war no longer. The classes (claiming to be the nation) which had never yet been able to make or keep peace have laid their hands upon the leash of the war-dogs, and it will go hard with them before they slip the noose again.

Most of these changes, and these demonstrations of altered opinion, have come about since the extension of the franchise in 1867. Household suffrage admitted to the exercise of the vote seven or eight hundred thousand men, and perhaps at this moment a million and a half take part in the election of representatives who would not, save for that Act, have had the right to do so. Political education has been stimulated amongst these and many others depending upon them, so that the nation is vastly more intelligent and powerful in the mass than it was when we went to the Crimea, or when, with incomprehensible wrongheadedness, we gave aid and encouragement to the slave-holding States, and thereby laid up for ourselves the adverse judgment at Geneva. By means of this reform and this political education, assisted by the wholesome teaching of many newspapers, tracts, public meetings and organizations, the public opinion of England has been renewed and re-invigorated. That which is called especially by men who fear it the democracy, which may hereafter come to be recognised as the soundest and steadiest section of the English people, has been made the potential master

of this country, within and without, and in respect of everything controlled by the Ministers whom it controls. The democracy—if it is to be so called—the democracy which another reform or two may make worthy of that name will break with many old traditions of home and foreign policy : with all bad and let us hope no single good tradition which it imports the nation to revere and keep. Happy is the man who, in spirit, will be at one with this England of the coming years—who will trust and not fear the developed strength and conscience of a people intrepid in justice and unconquerable in moral resolution.

Not only has the policy of England beyond the seas not been uniform in all ages, but it has varied with different Ministers, as well as at different epochs, and has, for easily assignable reasons, undergone more notable transformations than the policy of any other country in the world. An explanation sufficient without seeking a second is that a consistent and vigilant foreign policy was least necessary for an insular State, with frontiers barely and rarely assailable, and a population more given to commercial enterprise than greedy of war or military renown. The less imperative the need for action beyond the boundary, so much the less fixity of purpose and sameness of diplomacy from age to age. For France there has always been a Germany, and for Germany a France ; for Russia, always weaker neighbours, and for Spain and Italy stronger. England, on the other hand, has had to pick and choose her object ; now France, now Spain, now Holland, now Russia, and always for the greater part of two centuries one or more barbarian peoples in retreat (as it has been said) before the advancing tide

of our civilisation. But these were concerns of our own creation rather than inevitable and indispensable struggles; and the classes actually engaged in creating them, in conducting the intrigues, in raising and dispensing the taxes required by such a policy, in leading the armies and dividing the spoils, were the classes into whose power the government of England had fallen.

For a few centuries after the Norman incursions it was the kings and their favourites, displacing the council of wise men whose moot or parliament had once been potent with the English kings. Then it was the barons, who gained ascendancy over the monarchs, not entirely losing it under the Tudors. Next it was for a time the Stuart kings, with slight and uncertain control from the House of Commons. Then again the great nobles, incautiously enriched by Henry the Eighth and his successors, curtailed the prerogative of the Crown, and took the authority of the State into their own hands. But from first to last, if we except the short period of the Commonwealth, it was never the people of England in the mass who, by their own voice and the pronouncement of their own opinion, declared when and against whom they were to fight, how much and for what purpose they were to be taxed. The nominal representation of the shires and boroughs had been most nearly genuine when the king's prerogative was least disputed. It became the veriest delusion and farce when the aristocracy had contrived to clip the wings of this prerogative. Down to the third decade of the present century a majority of votes in the House of Commons was under the absolute control of some two hundred individuals; and this petty clique of monstrously rich and practically irresponsible men swayed the whole fortunes and destinies of England in the sacred and maligned name of the people.

He who would form a notion of the varying foreign policies pursued by our later kings and aristocratic rulers, and especially of the main lines of policy followed during the past two hundred years down to our own times, may turn at once to the pages of English history dealing with the Restoration and Revolution of the seventeenth century. Of that which went before it is enough if he remember the exploits of the Plantagenet kings, barons, and common soldiers in France, the dealings of Walsingham and other Ministers of Elizabeth with the Protestants on the Continent, the account rendered by her sailors of the Catholic armada, the more than kingly imperiousness of Cromwell with the enemies of his country, and the deadly blow which he struck at the Spanish empire in the New World.

With such pictures as these in his mind the student of history, opening his book at the reign of the second Charles, and reading how the successor of Edward Plantagenet craved gifts and pensions from the successor of his captive French king—how the sons of Blake's invincibles cowered before the masthead broom of insulting Hollanders—how English Puritans sought refuge with the descendants of Elizabeth's proteges—will find himself at a new starting-point in the relations of his country with the European States. A world of difference exists between 1570 and 1670, and even between 1655 and 1665. Political morality had been succeeded by a political debauch: Charles the Restored took vengeance on his father's judges by cynically wiping out the record of English fame and influence, writing in its place a record of shameless dependence and corruption.

And yet so true to nature is the working of historic law that the royal lackey who begged money from Louis the Fourteenth in order to rid himself of the constitu-

tional control of his subjects was actually (as it turned out) laying thereby the foundation of a policy which was to become traditional with a great English party. One of his strongest objects seems to have been to secure freedom of indulgence for his vicious passions; and whilst he was sporting with one or other of his mistresses, or simulating belief in the religion of his people, his Ministers were building upon his very follies and crimes a system by which honest men were able to make their country respected.

The foreign policy which had its origin in the reign of Charles was a policy founded upon French alliance. To the king this alliance commended itself on various grounds—first because in his exile he had received hospitality and encouragement from Louis; secondly because the Grand Monarque found it answer his purpose to continue his pecuniary aids to his English cousin as long as the latter sued for them; thirdly because Charles and his brother were plotting against the liberties of the people, and relied upon French help in this treacherous enterprise; fourthly because they were both Romanists at heart even before they had formally done obeisance to the Pope; and for other reasons in addition. Of the king's Ministers, some were already inclined to a closer union with France; others were drawn in the same direction by royal favour and insistence; whilst others were unalterably averse in mind to the policy which Charles desired to establish. The opinion of the country, so far as it could be known, was reflected by this last section—by Ashley, by the Presbyterians and the Country Party. The king soon discovered that England would not endure a return to Catholicism, that it had no sympathy with the designs of France, that it was as much disposed as it had been

for a hundred years past to exclude French influence from Flanders, and that it preferred the friendship of Holland, and even of Spain, to any temptation which Louis the Fourteenth could hold out.

The intrigues of Charles the Second and his subservient Ministers cover them with deserved contempt. It is scarcely accurate to say of them that they had any distinct foreign policy, beyond that of making England dependent upon France, and selling the support of this country to the champion of despotic power and Roman religion. Even this policy could not be consistently maintained in face of the popular tendencies which set in the very opposite direction. Arlington was secretly a Catholic like the king, and he was responsible for the shameful Treaty of Dover, whereby Louis was to give Charles a pension of a million pounds a year, and Charles was to proclaim his religion and to declare war on Holland. But yet it was the same Arlington who, less than two years before, had formed the Triple Alliance with Holland and Sweden, for the express purpose of curbing France. Danby again, selected by Charles as his go-between and tool, did much dirty work for his royal master, to the length of offering in Charles's name to betray the allies of England; and yet we find Danby himself forced by English public feeling to declare war against France.

It is difficult to imagine that by any possibility whatever a tradition founded in so much baseness and turpitude could be continued and developed into a serviceable and even honourable policy. It is only in a limited sense that the continuity of the tradition can be maintained; but the Tories of the eighteenth century could not divest themselves of the inheritance which descended to them from the second Charles and the second James.

Another tradition of English statesmanship took root in the reign of Charles ; and this also, like the first, was generated in corruption. It is a melancholy fact that the high moral purport of Ashley Lord Shaftesbury should have been marred and tainted by crimes which forbid us to regard him with genuine admiration. Ashley hated and opposed the intrigues of the degraded monarch. He was the champion of English liberties, the defender of Protestantism ; he vindicated Parliamentary rule and upheld the constitution. But the means which he adopted in his heroic struggle with the king and the court were often morally indefensible, and the natural consequence of their immorality was their eventual want of success. The religious intolerance of his Petitioners, with the crimes committed by him and them in the name of religion, produced a reaction directly favourable to Charles. His encouragement of Monmouth as a pretender was so ill-advised that the Abhorrrers gained the sympathies of the people, and the succession of the Duke of York was assured by the very acts intended to exclude him from the throne.

Ashley overreached himself in subtlety ; and yet it is not altogether to his discredit that he should have preferred even the king's bastard as a candidate for the crown to the Prince of Orange, from whose countrymen England had suffered much humiliation. In a reign crowded with paradoxes there is no paradox more strange than that Charles and Danby, who sold their country for French gold, should have contrived the marriage of William with Mary of York, whilst Ashley, the progenitor of the Whig party, set up the puppet Monmouth.

From the defeat and flight of Ashley to the flight and deposition of James the Second—a period of seven

years—the Stuarts were again practically despots in England, and thus the attitude of the two political parties was emphasized before the inauguration of the struggle which awaited them in William's reign. The Abhorrrers of the past, the Tories of the future, were marked out as men who could endure a Charles and flatter a James. Their opponents were the men who could tolerate neither of these tyrants—who sympathized with Argyle and Monmouth, who abominated the truculent despotism of James the Papist, and learned to pray for the advent of William. It was inevitable that in such circumstances the principles of the early Whigs should have been displayed rather in their treatment of the foreign relations of the country than in domestic affairs. The task of securing civil and religious freedom at home was inseparably connected with the task of promoting the same cause on the Continent. At any rate, so far as the Prince of Orange was able to assist the plans of the friends of liberty in England, he did it for a price, as his part of the contract struck between himself and his English sponsors. These in their turn had engagements to fulfil towards William; and so far as they accepted the views and aided the designs of the Dutch Prince they committed themselves to a definite policy in Europe . . . and to a great deal more.

Here, it may be said, was the origin of the Whig tradition in foreign affairs. Of course the Whigs were lineally descended from men of a similar cast in former reigns—earlier than the Petitioners, and it may be earlier than the Protestant statesmen of the reign of Elizabeth. But their tradition as it existed and was developed in the eighteenth century may be accurately dated from the contract entered into between the Prince of Orange and the English Parliament in 1688-9.

By this contract England gained much ; but the price which it had to pay for its acquisitions was extravagant, exorbitant, and (as the result has shown) almost intolerably burdensome. From the accession of William to the throne war on the Continent, and particularly with France, was chronic. The people of this country were perpetually drawn into complications which they need never have touched—many of which would never have arisen but for the initiation assumed by the English Government. The expenditure on these wars and machinations of William and his successors was enormous, and rose at last to a monstrous and scandalous pile of debt which neither we nor our children's children can hope to be rid of. And the responsibility for war and debt alike rests not with the nation as a whole, but with the monarchs, the lords, the Commons representing so small a fraction of the people of Great Britain.

If the contract with William had been the only means by which Parliamentary government could be secured, and if there had been no other conceivable mode of acquiring civil and religious freedom, the price would have been worth paying. But it was not so. England would have broken her chains without William of Orange. Before he landed, before he was invited to land by Whigs and Tories, Nonconformists and High Churchmen, the masses of the people were seething with rage at the tyrannies of James. A little more and they would have rebelled again, as they had rebelled half a century back ; the Bloody Assize would have been forgotten—or remembered only as a spur to stern determination. The cheers of the soldiers at Hounslow for the acquittal of the bishops—at the moment when the unpopular king was riding through the camp—showed how high the tide had risen, and how fast it was flowing

towards its mark. A little more and all England would have been a camp, and a new Cromwell might have been found to establish a new and a more stable Commonwealth. How much we might have gained, how much more rapidly and surely we might have advanced to the goal of popular freedom if there had been greater courage and enterprise amongst the peers who brought William over! Or even if William were a necessity—if it be urged that his marriage with Princess Mary had made him a natural and legitimate candidate for the crown—how incalculably would all generations of Englishmen have been profited by a larger measure of political foresight amongst the Whigs, by greater shrewdness and resolution during the first few years of his reign!

It is difficult to say what William would have done if the peers and Parliament had set their faces against his designs, and begun by refusing to declare war on Louis for his recognition of James as still king of England. He might have returned to the Hague, and left the country to its own devices. And then there might have been disorder, bloodshed, civil war. But at any rate we should have escaped the vast evils which flowed from the grafting of the Dutch foreign policy upon the old stock of English statecraft.

It is a suggestive fact that the two foreign policies which were traditional in England during the eighteenth century, and which alternated with the change of parties to the no small confusion of our relations towards other States, were both conferred upon us by France. In plain terms and rough outline it may be said that the attitude of this country before the nations of the world was decided by its sentiments for the time being in regard to

its neighbour on the Continent. One man, Louis the Fourteenth, had more to do with the shaping of our policy for something like a century and a half than any individual English statesman, or than any current of genuine English feeling in the epoch when the afore-said traditions were created.

In view of the unquestionable existence, more or less occult, of a national or popular tradition, side by side with the philogallic and antigallic theories, it is well to mark that these two theories which led England into ruinous wars, and all but destroyed her with a gigantic debt, were not in reality the offspring of English national sentiment, but rather of royal emergencies and aristocratic intrigues. It is true that the people like their rulers were swept along by gusts of passion favourable and unfavourable to France. It is true, and yet more significant, that religious feeling, common to noble and peasant, to Parliament and mob alike, had vast influence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries upon our relations with the Continent. It is true that French wars were sometimes popular in England, so far as one might judge the mood of the unrepresented and half-articulate classes. But there are few of these conflicts which we should be justified in describing as people's wars; and certainly not one from the Restoration downwards was a war of the people in the same sense that all were wars of monarchs and unrepresentative Parliaments.

Perhaps the nearest approach to a people's war with France after the Restoration was in 1678, when the armies of Louis had overrun Flanders, defeated the Prince of Orange at Cassel, and menaced the Protestants of Europe with final ruin. Then there was unmistakably a popular cry for war; and this time it was the king

who put his veto on the warlike design of the people. A strange phenomenon: explained, however, by the fact that his impecunious Majesty had coolly sold both allies and subjects to the French.

There is no more critical epoch in the history of English policy than the year just mentioned, when the three traditions met and conflicted together, and when one at least of them entered upon its most active and effective stage. It was an antigallic if not a purely national policy to keep the French out of Flanders. It had been a Protestant and therefore perhaps a national policy from the days of Elizabeth. The desire of the English people to fight for the independence of the Flemish seaboard marks the vitality of the tradition. The scandalous conduct of Charles and the exultation of the English Catholics over the Treaty of Nimeguen and the triumph of Louis bear witness to the simultaneous vigour of the despotic and papal policy, which always counted on the French alliance. And the basis of the Whig tradition was completed and consolidated by the amazing act of Charles and Danby (of all men) in selecting William of Orange as a husband for Mary of York.

The national tradition, in spite of fitful revivals of this kind, was obscured by the Restoration, and overwhelmed by the antigallic policy erected into a system by William the Third. And the chief reason why, being national, it could not assert itself in after years above the alternating Whig and Tory traditions was because the Parliament which should have proclaimed and enforced it was not truly representative of the feeling of the country. It had been so, in great measure, from its institution to the time of the Barons' Wars. Its authority was usurped by the Tudors; but at the same time the Tudor

monarchs were often in harmony with the masses of their subjects, thanks to the conciliatory effects of the Reformation. But when the aristocracy had fought and won their battles with the Crown, and when an oligarchy had secured the supreme power of State by limitation of the royal prerogative, Parliament itself grew feeble with the increasing feebleness of the king. The House of Commons was for war or peace, for spending or saving money, as the case might be, but it did not express the wishes of the people at large. Its majority did not even express the wishes of the great towns, of the cultivators of land, of tradesmen, professional men and private gentlemen, except in so far as these might concur in opinion with the few aristocratic families and wealthy individuals who swayed the pocket and rotten boroughs. The nation might or might not think with the proprietary Houses. If not, so much the worse for the nation.

At any rate the national view of foreign policy, when it differed from the Whig and Tory traditions, was for a long time overborne by the fact—entirely subversive of the plan of our constitution—that the Lords, being in themselves an Estate of the realm, had by money and influence also made themselves spokesmen of the Estate of the Commons.

II.

WHIG TRADITIONS.

THE death of Mazarin, in March 1661, threw the Grand Monarque on his own resources. Richelieu and the late Cardinal had served France well : the one had humbled Spain in the field, the other had given his sovereign the Spanish Infanta for a wife, and with her a dowry including certain coveted districts of Flanders and Luxembourg. Now Louis determined to rule in his own name, and both his people and the governments of Europe soon learned that he was equal to the task. It was he who was to sway the destinies of France and to disturb the councils of her neighbours for more than half a century to come. It was by him that a new direction was to be given to the foreign policy of England, whereby the whole after history of this country has been coloured and distorted.

The Spanish marriage gave Louis something more than the stipulated dowry, or if it did not give him he assumed a claim on his wife's behalf to the Catholic provinces of Spain in the Low Countries. He grasped in 1665 the pretext of the war between England and Holland, and at the invitation of the latter country he took the field, and seized Charleroi, Douai, and other places from their Spanish garrisons. With varying fortunes through successive years, holding cheap the contemptible alternations of English policy, the French monarch pursued his designs. When he could not out-

wit our diplomatists he bribed our king ; and in spite of the Triple Alliance, in spite of Prince William's marriage with Mary of York, in spite of the anxiety of the English people to curb his ambitions, he humbled Spain and Austria, and carried off many valuable prizes of war. England also was humbled, by French gold if not by French arms. Holland alone maintained her honour and her territory. At the conclusion of the Peace of Nimeguen Holland alone had nothing to renounce ; and William of Orange, the recognised head of the Coalition, could personally treat with the king of France as an equal.

It was clear that the Prince of Orange looked on the Treaty of Nimeguen as a simple truce, and a truce full of danger for himself and his allies. During the eleven years which passed before he ascended the English throne he laboured to prepare the ground for a renewal of the struggle. Louis vastly aided his foes by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which drove many thousands of Frenchmen out of their native country, and stimulated the Protestants throughout Europe to an ardent desire for vengeance. The Coalition henceforth became more than ever a religious league. Sweden, Savoy, the German States made common cause with Holland. Spain was glad to have a chance of recovering her lost provinces. Even the Pope was enlisted against Louis, whose head had been turned by his military triumphs until he assumed the airs of a king of kings. William, patiently awaiting the development of English politics under the infatuated misrule of James the Second, held the Coalition in readiness to spring.

The English Revolution of 1688 was doubtless in some measure determined by the persecution of the Protestants in France—neither the first nor the last instance

of reaction between the public opinions of the two countries. At the end of 1688 James took refuge at the court of Louis, who received him with open arms, and promised him both an asylum and a vindication against his subjects. In January 1689 the king of France, with the energetic rapidity which his enemies knew so well, struck the first blow by declaring war against Holland. Immediately afterwards William responded from his new vantage ground with a declaration of war on the part of England, which could not tolerate—as the king and his council maintained—the recognition by Louis of the royal authority of his guest.

From this moment we behold England fully committed to the struggle against France; so fully committed that the inherited quarrel endured long after the reign of William, and the traditional enmity outlived the reigns of his four successors.

Could this committal have been avoided—could the Whig tradition of foreign policy have been nipped in the bud if William had never come to England, or if his English councils and parliaments had steadily refused to take active part in the Coalition? Was there ample ground for the English declaration of war in the hospitality of Louis to James (of course before armies and fleets had been placed at James's disposal)? And—a question perhaps not much considered at the time—was there sufficient justification in the known sentiments of the English people for the wars of England against France?

In the first place the participation of England in the European Coalition was assured from the day when Danby, Shrewsbury, Devonshire, and Bishop Compton wrote to invite the Prince of Orange to accept the crown. No one would imagine that the Prince could withdraw from the leadership of this Coalition, and they who were

his sponsors with the English people must have been prepared to weight the scales with the sword of England. William would not have mounted the throne on any other understanding; and in fact he firmly refused the crown until the reality of the royal prerogative was guaranteed to him. Once arrived at this point, the champion of Europe could not have been expected to hesitate. At first abetted in his plans by the peers of both parties, and soon afterwards menaced by their dallying with James, he persevered steadily in either case with his obstinate antagonism to the French king. The Commons he found hard to manage, and, as he thought, niggardly in their allowances for the war; but on the whole he succeeded in bringing the power of England to bear upon his enemy. As for the common people who were not the Commons, and who had no voice to declare their mind, the king might be excused for thinking (if he thought of it at all) that a Protestant nation, with their hereditary jealousy of France, and inflamed by a recent cause of exasperation, were more heartily with him than the aristocracy and the Commons.

There was so much truth in this supposition that the majority of English Whigs and Protestants were manifestly pleased by the war against the French tyrant and the protector of the exiled James. There were of course many on the opposite side. The Jacobites were already strong, and whenever William's fortunes were or seemed to be at the ebb they grew stronger and more aggressive. The treasons of men like Admiral Herbert, threatening as they did his throne, his life-long hopes, and the honour and safety of England, must have been especially galling to the king. The loss of the naval battle at Beachy Head threw his plans into confusion; another defeat at La Hogue would have been followed by an insurrection

of the friends of James and the discouragement of the Grand Alliance. In England and Ireland alike William must have seen that his subjects were by no means unanimous in their liking for the war; but he had on the other hand a staunch support from the Whig party as a whole.

The Grand Alliance virtually succeeded in checking the aggressions of the French, and to William the Third is due the credit of the achievement. Judging from his point of view, and from the point of view of the leaders of the Revolution, the work was worth doing. From our own point of view the wisdom of our ancestors is questionable. A war to prevent the restoration of James was doubtless a sacred necessity; but a war of such magnitude, and an expenditure so unlimited, for the sake of Dutch independence or the European balance of power, or even the assertion of Protestant liberties on the Continent, was less necessary and sacred. The continuation of the war after France had come to the end of her aggressive energy was decidedly impolitic for the English nation. Now at all events if not before the foisting of the Dutch policy upon England was consummated; and it was consummated by the Whigs.

From the year 1694 the Whig and Tory traditions of foreign policy may be clearly distinguished, and the responsibilities are more and more plainly marked. Up to that year William had done his best to govern with Ministers of the united parties; and his difficulties had been so great that he lent a willing ear to the scheme of the Earl of Sunderland when that supple politician advised him to choose his Chancellors and Secretaries of State exclusively from the party which had a majority

in the Commons. He did so with greater readiness because though in 1694 the Tories predominated he had reason to believe that an appeal to the country would furnish a majority of Whigs, and the Whigs had shown themselves most amenable to his guidance. These provisions were put to the test in the following year, and were justified by the result. A general election in 1695 placed the Whigs in power; William composed his Ministry of Russell, Wharton, Somers, Montague, and Shrewsbury; and for the first time in English history the House of Commons was under the control of a responsible party Cabinet.

The intrigues of 1694-5 are worthy of particular attention for the purposes of our present inquiry. The Tories were and were not the heirs of the shameful Stuart traditions. Some of them, by no means all, desired the return of James, and subsequently favoured the Old and Young Pretenders. Some of them, perhaps very few, had built the edifice of their political faith on the sorry foundation laid by Danby and King Charles. One wing of the party would undoubtedly have sworn by the Treaty of Dover, which aimed at restoring the Catholic religion in England and making the English king a French pensioner, though hardly one of them in William's reign would have accepted a moral responsibility for the acts of Charles and James. But nearly all were opposed to the continuance of the war with France; and even such of them as loyally paid allegiance to William protested against further hostilities. They had never been enthusiastic in favour of the Grand Alliance, and they now began very seriously to count its cost. They pointed to the sacrifices of the country, to the desperate condition of English commerce, to the monstrous and ever increasing burden of debt. The drain

of our resources during the past six years had indeed been outrageous, and no prudent man (so they contended) could look upon it without alarm. When the king ascended the throne he found a "King's Debt" of less than seven hundred thousand pounds; now it was reckoned by millions, and the interest had to be provided for by novel and enormous taxation. They refused to value the achievements of the war at such a price, and urged the king to conclude an honourable peace.

But King William chafed under this reasoning. To checkmate and humiliate Louis was the grand idea, almost the one idea in his mind; and he set himself to find counsellors who would advise him in the way that he wished to go. Now it must be admitted that the policy of the Tories at this juncture was a natural and a creditable one. Whatever unpatriotic elements there may have been in the party, it was not lack of patriotism which accounted for the peace policy of the majority. As it turned out, the advocates of peace could not command the suffrages of the constituencies, and it may be argued from this that the war was still popular with the country—that the war policy was still a national rather than a Whig policy in 1695. It does not necessarily follow, for the simple reason that vast numbers of the taxpayers had no votes. Their opinion was never asked, and there was no way open to them under the constitution of bringing their grievances effectively before the Legislature. They may or may not have been in favour of the war. The probability is that having so long borne and being still called upon to bear an oppressive taxation for small or inappreciable results they were heartily opposed to it. This would not imply that the non-voters thought differently in the matter from the voters immediately above them in the social scale—a thing which

rarely though occasionally happens. The voters themselves may have had no voice in the decision. The electoral system had not reached the pitch of corruption which it was to attain in the course of the following century ; but it was already possible for a minority of votes, of intelligence, of responsible worth, to overwhelm the majority. On the whole it would hardly be unfair to say that there is no sufficient evidence of popularity to justify any one in believing that the policy of William in his struggle against France had been adopted as a national policy in England, or that it was ever more than part of the general compact between the Prince of Orange and the Whigs.

In any case the conduct of the Whig leaders in 1694 committed them more absolutely than ever to the Dutch foreign policy. When the king was in the midst of his difficulties with the Tory Ministers, and the necessary votes were hard to obtain, the Junto who at that time led the Opposition gave him to understand that such difficulties as these need not obstruct his path if he would put the administration of affairs entirely in their hands. They bid for power by virtually offering to carry on the war with vigour ; and William would have been something more than impartial and magnanimous if he had refused to listen to a temptation of this kind, dangled before him by a group of capable statesmen, with the victor of La Hogue at their head. Not that Admiral Russell and his colleagues stooped to hypocrisy or a surrender of conscience for the mere possession of office. They doubtless believed in the necessity and ultimate profit of the war—as most of our statesmen in every age, and of each party, have believed in these things, whatever disastrous game of war they may have been playing. The fact remains that the Whigs undertook to

carry on the struggle with France after it was clear that Louis had been checked, and that the Grand Alliance had made Europe safe, in spite of the growing distress of their countrymen, and in face of the peaceful inclinations of the Tory Ministers.

The tradition had been finally and deliberately adopted. It was no longer a question of contracting for a constitutional king, for they had already secured one. It was not a question of defending the country against the machinations of James. Russell and Shrewsbury had themselves intrigued with the late king, whilst it was perfectly well known that many of the Tory leaders had washed their hands of the Stuarts, and would never consent to their return. It was not even a personal question of forcing from Louis a recognition of William's title to the throne. That would have come as a matter of course with the arrangement of a peace, and every one knew that Louis was ready for peace in 1694, if not earlier. It was part of William's policy that peace could be made with the French king only by wresting it from him by a victory in the field ; and it was by accepting this policy that the Whigs committed themselves to a course of Dutch pertinacity and obstinacy, when they might have gained a notable victory for the cause of peace and retrenchment.

After all it was not by military prowess that peace was made with France, and the Stuarts were thrown over by Louis the Fourteenth. The Treaty of Ryswick was concluded in 1697, after a secret correspondence between William and Louis, in which the English king made terms with his inveterate enemy for the express purpose of defeating Austria's pretensions to the crown of Spain. This also was Dutch policy, and the unfortunate Whigs who still composed William's Ministry found

themselves on the point of being committed to another perilous intrigue, whereby England was once more to step in as the special providence of the Continent.

It was natural enough that William, with his remarkable zeal for maintaining the balance of power in Europe, should see a vast danger in the rivalry of the French and Austrian monarchs for the Spanish throne. The addition to either Austria or France of the vast possessions of Charles the Second—including Spain itself, the Netherlands, the north Italian provinces, and the Indies—could not seem a matter of indifference to ordinary Englishmen, trained as they had been even from the time of Elizabeth to think themselves the natural protectors of the Protestant countries. There has been no time in our history when we could have contemplated without anxiety the existence of so great an empire on the Continent. If, however, Louis had been allowed to accept for his grandson the legacy conferred on him by the doting Spanish king, it did not by any means follow that Spain and France would ever be united. Men of sense (without the strong preconceptions of William the Third) did not fear this issue at the time, and the English nation took a more sober view of the Spanish question than the king. He, for his part, would have put his veto on the will, and he did his best to prevent Louis and his grandson from profiting by it. But Englishmen had had an impressive lesson. The people were resolutely bent on peace. The general election of 1701 returned a Tory majority, and Godolphin, rightly interpreting the popular will, refused to see cause of war in the Duke of Anjou's entry into Madrid, or even in the seizure of the Netherlands by Louis. The Tory policy might have prevailed on this occasion if it had not been for an extraordinary act of infatuation on the part of

the French king, who, in distinct violation of the treaty signed by him four years previously, acknowledged the son of James as king of England.

A complete change came over the nation and Parliament when they heard of this calculated insult and defiance. It was clearly a cause of war, according to all the rules of international law, and it would have argued greater moral courage than that generation was capable of exercising if the gauntlet of Louis had not been instantly picked up. In these days we might afford, in similar circumstances, to laugh at the refusal of a foreign sanction for a dynastic change, and we might possibly preserve our calmness in face of the aggression of one of the Great Powers on the opposite coast of the channel ; but in 1701 this self-command was not possible. The traditions were merged in an outbreak of passion, and a Tory Ministry proposed a vote for 40,000 men.

The death of William, in 1702, had a curious effect on English parties, and on their dispositions in regard to foreign affairs. The Whigs were not slow in recovering their lost vantage ground, but for the moment they were "dished" by the irony of events—long before their political opponents had reduced that operation to a fine art. Marlborough was a Tory ; the Lord Treasurer Godolphin was a Tory ; and yet it was the old Whig policy which they both so eagerly pursued. Queen Anne formally declared (for the satisfaction of the reconstituted Grand Alliance) her intention to continue the policy of King William ; and thus the new European war was opened on the same lines as the war of 1689-97, the chief difference being that the Earl of Marlborough had taken the place of his royal predecessor. It was still a personal influence which swayed the Coalition, and played England as a pawn on the chessboard of Europe. The

transfer of authority from king to subject and from Whig to Tory brought no improvement in the system under which this country had been made to play its new role, and no alleviation of the popular distress. Rather the contrary. Marlborough and his friends proved themselves to be adepts at the game which their rivals had taught them. William had raised the National Debt from little more than half a million to twelve millions and a half. Under Anne, in a period shorter by two years, it was increased to thirty-six millions sterling.

But it is not to be supposed that the Whigs allowed themselves to be definitely excluded from office whilst a Whig war and a Whig policy were being successfully carried on. Some of the best of the Tories, as we shall see, were faithful to their tradition, and Marlborough, who had battles to fight at home as well as abroad, was compelled to supply several notable defections by drawing on the ranks of the Opposition. The elections of 1705 returned a majority favourable to the continuance of the struggle, but the most ardent and influential of the war party were Whigs. The Ministry was now formed by a coalition from men of both parties; and a year or two later the members of the Junto had ousted the remaining Tories from the Government. Sunderland, Wharton, Somers, Cowper, recovered place and power, but only to find that the fruit of their victory was an apple of Sodom.

The disgrace of Marlborough, his condemnation by a Tory majority for dishonesty, and his virtual exile from England, do not destroy the significant parallel between him and King William. Both led Coalitions of Europe against France, first with the sanction and then against the wishes of the English people. Both clung to war

after its necessity or excuse was gone, and both threw themselves into the arms of the Whigs in order to gain an extension of support from the House of Commons. In the case of both the staff on which they leaned was broken under their hands. Both practically secured the objects of the war and checked the ambition of Louis the Fourteenth; both outgrew the favour of their own country and had to submit to peace against their will.

So long as there were in France pretenders to the English crown whom the kings of France more or less directly favoured, it was inevitable and just that the Whigs should be constantly on their guard against intrigues from St Germain and Versailles. Their incentive to a watchful if not an active policy was infinitely more creditable after the Treaty of Utrecht than when it had sprung mainly from a compact with the Prince of Orange and a determination to cling to office. When the death of Anne was seen to be approaching, and the Jacobites were menacing civil war, their attitude was firm and intelligible. They came forward as representatives and champions of the Revolution of 1688, as defenders of the Protestant succession, as the friends of liberty and peace. There was no longer any need for a Dutch policy, though its traditions were ineradicable. War was not in their programme, and indeed they had more than enough to do in foiling the plots of traitors at home. The course pursued by the party for the next half century is altogether more satisfactory (at any rate from the point of view of our present subject) than it had been during the past five and twenty years. As for domestic policy, Walpole and Pitt were pledged to the strengthening of the constitution, to the encouragement of English industries, to financial measures, and peaceful national development.

One must not press too closely a comparison between the conduct of the two political parties in regard to the Stuart pretenders. There were Tories who displayed unshaken fidelity towards the new dynasty, as there were Whigs who corresponded with St Germain. The House of Hanover was not calculated to inspire Englishmen with enthusiastic loyalty, and a Tory, especially if he happened to be a Catholic, had some excuse for looking wistfully across the water, and privately drinking the health of James or Charles the Third. The Whigs, on the other hand, had no temptation to be disloyal. Their principles were established as the principles of the monarchy and the government; they had all the power of the State at their command, and all the sources of patronage under their control. The first two Georges were little better than nonentities, and gave the least possible trouble to their advisers. Seldom has an English Minister been more fortunate than Walpole or the elder Pitt in the circumstances of his Administration; and never has a party with equal claim to respect been so happy in the convergence of favourable events. Everything contributed to strengthen the Whigs in their supremacy. The defeat of the Jacobites in 1715, the disgrace of Oxford, the flight of Bolingbroke and Ormond, the implication of so many Tory leaders in an unsuccessful revolt, knit the country more closely than ever to the party of the Revolution, and left their opponents for many years under the stigma of disloyalty and treason.

The death of Louis the Fourteenth, which happened almost simultaneously with the fiasco of the Old Pretender, relieved England of what had so long been a nightmare to her. France was no longer held by

statesmen or private citizens as a hot-bed of intrigue from which it behoved them to expect every kind of evil growth; and indeed the change from the Grand Monarque to his successor was decidedly advantageous for Europe. Louis the Fifteenth, even when he grew to man's estate, was not an arch-plotter like his great-grandfather, whose spirit had descended in greater vigour upon his grandson Philip of Anjou, now Philip the Fifth of Spain. The Regent Orleans courted the alliance of England as a set-off against the aggressive designs of Philip, who, ably served by Alberoni, was striving to undo the Treaty of Utrecht, and was even prepared to violate his renunciation of the French succession. The English Ministry entered warily into the French alliance. They secured a confirmation of the Treaty—including the clause which barred the Stuarts from residing in France—and shared the responsibility of the engagement with Austria and Holland; but they took care not to be drawn into new campaigns on the Continent.

One great mistake was committed by Stanhope (during the absence of Walpole from the Ministry between 1716 and 1721), which, but for the accident of a storm in the Bay of Biscay, might have led to a prolonged war with Spain. An English fleet was sent in quest of the Spanish ships which had reduced Sardinia and were attempting to reduce Sicily, and, finding them in the Straits of Messina, sunk, captured, or dispersed them. The fleet with which the Spaniards hoped to take vengeance for this attack met the fate of another Spanish Armada bound on a like mission; but fortune might have dealt differently with the antagonists, and it was not Stanhope's wisdom which prevented a long war and a vast expenditure. It would have been little to

his credit if he had involved the country in a conflict with Spain, having France for his ally, half a dozen years after the conclusion of a peace with France, when our ally was Spain. The Whig tradition would scarcely have been improved by such a development at such a moment ; and perhaps it was well for England that the ambitions of Philip were curbed in time, and that Stanhope himself presently ceased to preside over her destinies. The Quadruple Alliance of 1718 may have been a wise act. Doubtless it seemed a necessary one at the crisis. But from our later point of view it appears probable that the attempt of Philip to disturb the settlement of 1713 might have been guarded against so far as English interests were concerned without any act of war.

For more than two decades Walpole was First Lord of the Treasury. The epoch was not one of unbroken peace for England. We fought with Austria and Spain in a cause which cannot be said to have imperatively demanded our interference ; but on the whole the time of Walpole's second Administration was a time of settled and deliberate peace. "He was," as Mr Green justly writes, "the first and greatest of our Peace Ministers. 'The most pernicious circumstances,' he said, 'in which this country can be are those of war, as we must be losers while it lasts and cannot be great gainers when it ends.' In spite of the complications of foreign affairs, and the pressure from the Court and Opposition, he resolutely kept England at peace. It was not that the honour or influence of England suffered in Walpole's hands, for he won victories by the firmness of his policy and the skill of his negotiations as effectual as those which are won by arms."

There are, in fact, two tests of ability which may be

applied to any statesman charged with the foreign affairs of a commercial and peace-loving country. His talent will be shown especially in two directions, and we may ask of him first, whether he has really been tried and tempted by the existence of grave complications, and by pressure at home and abroad which he has been firm enough to resist; and, secondly, whether he has been able to obtain for his country most or all of the advantages by peace which he might have secured by war, in addition to the supreme advantage of peace itself. Walpole stands the test in both respects, and it is because he does so, and because he was in other senses a typical Whig statesman, that he must always be regarded as in the best sense of the term a regenerator, if not a founder, of the Whig tradition of foreign policy.

There may be a foreign policy for England, as some maintain, which would not include (or which would strictly exclude) alliances with other nations for mutual defence, or for dynastic compacts, or for any other than commercial objects and the promotion of international goodwill. This is a novel theory in our own days; it had barely been formulated in the days of Walpole. He at any rate did not hold it. The basis of his system was the formation of defensive alliances calculated to check aggressive Powers on the threshold of war, with personal negotiation in the interests of peace. In the Treaty of Hanover—overborne, perhaps, by the advice of Townshend—he stepped across this line. In this case he not only bribed Sweden to neutrality but sent a fleet to the Baltic to inspire the Empress Catherine with awe. His excuse was that the Treaty and the despatch of the fleet were purely defensive: Denmark, threatened by Russia, was in the nature of a bulwark of England. The same spirit has led other and less prudent statesmen

to see bulwarks of England in every quarter of the globe, and has turned many a provision of pure defence into an origin of war. The problem is, how to defend England without putting it into the power of any other nation to say that there shall be war instead of peace. To hang out one's shield and throw down one's glove is not the best way to keep out of a quarrel.

They who think that Walpole ran unnecessary risk in 1726 may believe, on the other hand, that he was somewhat too pacific in 1738. Philip of Spain was still the disturbing cause. He had always hated England, and it must be confessed that this was a natural hatred. We held Gibraltar under the Treaty of Utrecht; we had foiled a desperate effort of the Spaniards to retake it in 1727. We were under engagements to restrict our trade with South America within certain very narrow limits, and our merchant seamen constantly violated these engagements. Philip could not rest quietly in the shadow of our naval supremacy, and he had now begun to plot with France for our overthrow. In England itself the old hatred of Spain revived with all the force which it had inspired in the minds of Elizabeth's sea-captains, and there was a clamour for war even before the nation knew how far Spain and France were committed to each other. Walpole was obliged to give way, and war was declared against Spain in 1739; but to the end of his tenure of office in 1742 he never entered into the struggle with vigour and energy.

It is impossible not to admire the tenacity with which Walpole clung to his principles and purpose, against the stream of public feeling, in spite of the defections of his followers, and even at the cost of his power and influence. Peace at almost any price was the maxim of his policy, more than a century before another school of

Liberalism accepted that phrase as accurately defining their own position in regard to foreign affairs. Few statesmen have been more wedded to office and more loth to abandon it than Walpole; and yet he resigned it in 1742 because he could not be persuaded to adopt a policy of war. The most skilful briber of his day, he fixed a stigma on his contemporaries either by saying or by acting as though he thought that every politician "had his price;" but he disproved the cynicism in his own person when he showed that England's leading statesman could not be bribed to wage a war of doubtful expediency, even by a continuance of the highest honours in the gift of the State.

Walpole's system of diplomacy, so far as he can be said to have formed one, was based on a continual alliance with France and Holland. The chief dangers of relying upon this compact as a provision for the maintenance of peace were first, that—assuming reciprocity in the connection—either of our allies might become involved in quarrels likely to drag us into war on their behalf, and, secondly, that either of them might be drawn into compacts with other Powers, injuriously affecting our interests. This latter supposition is what actually occurred. France secretly conspired against us with the king of Spain, whilst yet ostensibly loyal to her prior engagement, and it was in this manner that Walpole's system broke down. But if there was in that age any better plan by which he might have preserved the peace of England, it is at least questionable whether it would have availed to prevent the war of 1738.

It will be observed that Walpole's system differed from that of William the Third and his Whig Ministers in having France for "natural friend," and Spain (with or without Austria) for "natural enemy"; whereas the

earlier Dutch policy had found a natural enemy in France. The continuity of the Whig tradition is not destroyed by this difference, important as it was in itself. The interests of England—always ostensibly and often genuinely the sole consideration of English (or Anglo-Dutch) diplomatists—seemed to be affected in one age chiefly by French aggression, and in the next age chiefly by Spanish intrigue. But in both cases the cardinal error may be detected in the notion that it specially concerned England to maintain the balance of power in Europe. This was the great feature of William's scheme, the principal contribution made by him to English politics, and the abiding substance of the Whig tradition. It was comparatively new to our foreign policy in 1689. Take from the later Tudors and from Cromwell their designs for the protection of the Continental Protestants, and you leave them with scarcely any foreign policy whatever. Take from William, from Marlborough, and even from Walpole, the idea of European combinations for the settlement of European affairs, and very little will remain to them in the way of external policy beyond the dynastic motives which were a legacy of the Stuart tyranny.

The theory of the "balance of power" has been built up on an indefinite and fallacious idea, and it has at various times been productive of the greatest possible mischief in the community of European States. The most legitimate sense of this much-abused term seems to be that no one State in the community should be allowed to grow so strong, whether by aggression or otherwise, that it would be out of the power of an international concert to restrain it. This is intelligible, and it may be essentially true. But what are we to understand by the dictum that a State "should not be allowed" to

grow powerful? And what is to be the point and the rule of interference with a State which develops its strength in a natural and peaceful manner, without being actively aggressive?

The Dutch policy, adopted by the Whigs, was to form combinations of two or more States, pledged beforehand to resist an aggressive power, though that power might not attack every State in the combination, or even any one State. Europe was a "system," governed by a "balance," and a "combination" was to be formed for the express purpose of controlling the balance, and punishing any one who ventured to disturb it. France coveted Hainault, or Luxembourg, or an Italian or a Spanish province: let the Combination step in and make the war general which might have been confined to a trifling area. Of course there was the instinct of self-preservation in this plan. William the Third at any rate may have been actuated by such an instinct when he was yet Prince of Orange. But what motive of that kind affected him when he had ceased to be Dutch, and became an English king? What was Hainault to England, or England to Hainault?

Walpole, however, had a more legitimate object in forming his combinations than any Minister of the epochs which preceded his own. If he thought of the balance of power in Europe it was with a primary not to say exclusive consideration for the material welfare of England. He was not merely a peace Minister, but a Minister who recognised the vital importance of commerce to Englishmen; and abroad as at home he made everything bend to the necessity of giving all possible development to English trade. If Spain appeared to him in the guise of a natural enemy, it was because Spain attempted to exclude this country from the lucra-

tive maritime trade with America, and because it was the avowed aim of the Spaniards to destroy our supremacy on the seas. It was for him no simple question of maintaining a system and controlling a balance of power on the Continent. He sought to foster English commerce by restraining the State which menaced it; and he succeeded for a long series of years in effecting his object by the peaceful method of setting up a combination by which Spain was overawed.

The fact remains that Walpole's alliance with France was an interruption and exception to the particular Whig tradition inherited from William the Third, and having its origin in the aggrandisement of France by Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louis the Fourteenth. The basis of this tradition is formulated by Hume in one of his "Essays, Moral and Political," written in the last year of Walpole's Administration. "For above a century," he says, "Europe has remained on the defensive against the greatest force that ever perhaps was formed by the civil or political combination of mankind." If it was a hallucination it was nevertheless a rooted idea in the minds of Englishmen, and in no minds more firmly and deeply than in those of the Whigs.

France had made her secret compact with Spain in 1733, at the same time when the two nations embarked together in a vain attempt to wrest the sovereignty of Poland from the control of the Eastern Powers. This struggle ended in 1738, by which time the repeated feuds between English and Spanish merchants in America had so exasperated public opinion in England that Walpole's hand was forced, and he was compelled to declare war. The complications ensuing upon the death of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, and the gallant efforts of Maria Theresa to establish her title to her patrimony in

Austria, overshadowed the minor conflict. Walpole, powerful though out of office, would have made the policy of England turn upon and limit itself to the assistance (mainly pecuniary) which he thought fit to render to the Austrian Queen; but Lord Carteret's influence was now supreme with George the Second. The last of our crowned generals embarked on a campaign which was to have carried the war into France. Dettingen was followed by Fontenoy; and, whilst the military repute of England was being frittered away by a weak king abroad and a weak government at home, the Young Pretender was marching down to Derby.

The justification of Walpole's policy was complete. Not only was he shown to have been wisest in council during the past few years, but the failure of Charles Edward to rally Englishmen to his standard proved that between the first and second Jacobite revolts the heart of the country had been won by the peaceful and prosperous rule of the Whigs. Walpole had been succeeded after a short interval by Henry Pelham, brother of the Duke of Newcastle, who trod faithfully in the steps of his old leader. Pelham was obliged by the influence of the Court to carry on the war of the Austrian succession—though it was patent to every rational man that England had no business whatever in this Continental squabble for the inheritance of Charles the Sixth. But in domestic matters the pupil carefully followed the lead of his master, and he managed the affairs of the country with so much tact that on his death in 1754 the king is said to have exclaimed, "Now I shall have no more peace."

The Duke of Newcastle, who succeeded Henry Pelham in the leadership of the Whigs, signalised himself chiefly by his incapacity. The beginning of the

Seven Years' War was marked by disaster for England in the Mediterranean and on the Elbe, as well as in America and India, and the Duke saved himself from political extinction only by sharing the dignity and power of office with Pitt. Newcastle had most of the vices of the Whigs with few of their characteristic virtues, and it would be idle to seek in his career for the springs and motives of a consistent or intelligent foreign policy. But the circumstances in which England was placed during the later years of the reign of George the Second are sufficiently important to be passed under review.

The Seven Years' War, so far as the English participation in it is concerned, was little else than a continuation of the war of Austrian succession; and that, as we have seen, was coincident with our commercial war against Spain and France. The Bourbon Compact was opposed to us throughout, from 1733 during nearly thirty years. Dating from our declaration of war in 1738 we were almost incessantly in conflict with France, and we should have carried on the struggle without intermission if Pitt had had his way, and if George the Third and his "Bootjack"—as the Earl of Bute was contemptuously called—had not somewhat ignominiously backed out of it.

Now Pitt, a member of the Whig party (but a "patriot" Whig, who for some time had been a thorn in Walpole's side), was by taste and talent a War Minister, and his counsel had been for war from the beginning. He had earned his legacy of ten thousand pounds from the Duchess of Marlborough by the spirit with which he opposed the peaceful government of Walpole. He had

taken the helm from Newcastle (after the Duke's failure in 1756) by virtue of his known disposition and abilities. He fell from power in 1761 because he insisted, against the new king and his friends, on fresh campaigns. His policy was essentially one of war. But he had not received this policy as a trust from his predecessors. Walpole had not believed in war as an instrument of national advancement. Pelham had inclined to Walpole's views, although he was compelled to fight both France and Spain. Newcastle had simply taken matters as he found them, and had had little option when the Seven Years' War broke out. It was from neither of these three Ministers that Pitt received the Whig tradition—to combat France, to maintain by armed intervention the balance of power on the Continent, to lavish money on combinations, and to see a natural friend and a natural enemy on the occasion of every European war. The continuity was suspended for something like thirty years, so far as regards the professed sentiments of the Whig leaders; and yet Pitt was simply taking up a thread which had never been actually broken when he devoted himself early in life to a policy based and built on war.

The fact is that the tradition which had been virtually that of a party, and which Walpole had only repudiated so far as it recognised war as its necessary mode of operation, was continued by the people themselves when their Ministers appeared to neglect it. The reaction from the long peace of 1721-1738 exhibited itself in the latter year as a popular sentiment of hatred against Spain; and from this time forward for many years the spirit of Marlborough, if not of William the Third, was harboured in the breasts of Englishmen. It was public opinion which carried on the series of wars under the Pelhams and the elder Pitt; and we shall do no wrong to the memory of

the latter statesman if we conclude that he was a War Minister chiefly because he read the minds of his fellow-countrymen, and interpreted their wishes when Walpole was unable or unwilling to understand them.

It is no doubt in a limited sense that the people of England can be said to have adopted the policy of armed intervention in European affairs. There was still a People behind the people which was inarticulate and unconsulted ; but, so far as Englishmen were actually resolved on war, we must suppose that they had been inoculated with the idea by the politicians of the revolutionary party, and naturally reacted from the inordinately long period of Walpole's quiet rule to the military triumphs and grandeur of the age of Marlborough.

The contrast between Walpole and Pitt is all the more significant when we regard them as illustrating a recognised maxim of eighteenth-century diplomatists, that when a nation is not swayed by its own interests, it is swayed by the personal character of the man who is at its head.* Walpole, admirably moral in his attachment to the principles of peace and industrial development, governed men by the most immoral system of bribery ever attempted in England. Pitt, who probably chose the method of war only because he saw that the nation demanded it, would not stoop to systematic corruption. Both were personally disinterested ; both were in a manner isolated by a statesmanlike breadth which found few parallels amidst the political meanness of their age. They stood at the poles of the Whig party, and yet each

* " Nations, said the political writers of the last century, are governed partly by their own interests, partly by the private interests, the prejudices and passions, of those who have the chief hand in managing their affairs."—Professor Montagu Bernard, "Four Lectures on Subjects connected with Diplomacy ;" Lect. 2.

in turn had the bulk of the party with him. Walpole for peace, Pitt for war—both were supreme in power and authority, and both, strange to say, were the idols of the commercial classes. If Walpole was one of our first Ministers who raised the interests of trade to the level of high statesmanship, Pitt was one of the first who acknowledged and employed the political force of the nation at large. He taught the king, as George the Second once reminded him, to look for the voice of the people elsewhere than in the House of Commons; and it was on the people as a whole that he preferred to rest for his support. He was a popular War Minister because he undertook to give the nation what it had clamoured for. Walpole was a popular Peace Minister because the nation in his time had desired peace, and prospered by securing it.

It cannot be denied that the English people were themselves in great measure responsible for their wars in the middle of the eighteenth century. The mass of the commercial and industrial population scarcely had the power of preventing the wars with France under William the Third and Anne, even if they had wished to do so. They had power to stop the wars under George the Second. If they had displayed more self-command, if they had not given way to passion, and had not been moved by undue commercial greed in America, they would have supported Walpole in his strenuous efforts to maintain peace—and perhaps they would not have suffered by it. At any rate they had themselves to thank for the war in the first instance: and at the same time they had to pay for the retention of Gibraltar, which was one of the principal incitements of Spanish hatred, and the appropriation of which by England at the Peace of Utrecht was an act eminently calculated to involve us in future complications.

But if the people desired war, and if Pitt attained power by giving them that which they desired, it is certain that he professed a warlike policy with hearty good-will, inspired by a conviction of its value to the country. He is not entirely relieved of his responsibility by the mood of the nation, for when the nation began to be tired of fighting he urged it to maintain the struggle. In short, he was not merely an instrument of the popular will, but also a mouthpiece of the Whig tradition, which he completely restored after its temporary obscuration by Walpole.

Three critical events in the history of British dominion beyond the seas distinguished the life of the elder Pitt. In the first two—the conquest of Canada and the foundation of Indian empire—he played an important part; for it was his spirit and constancy which encouraged our generals and enabled them to achieve their splendid triumphs. The other event occurred whilst Pitt was virtually excluded from power by George the Third, and under a succession of Ministers equally incompetent for war and peace. It may be that if Pitt had remained at the head of affairs the English colonists in North America would never have secured their independence—would never have been exasperated into hostility, or would have been subdued by the master-mind at home. As it was, Chatham condemned the weakness and folly which characterized our dealings with the colonists, and from first to last avowed his sympathy with a nation struggling for liberty. There is no reason whatever to believe that he would have felt differently if he had been in office. It was only his illness in 1766 and his death in 1778 which prevented him from resuming the helm and restoring the credit of England. In the last year of his life he proposed a policy which, carried out under

his own direction, might have conciliated the States to the mother country by granting them self-government in local affairs ; and in the firm belief that this plan would succeed, he protested against the simple abandonment of all authority over America on the very morrow of Burgoyne's surrender. If he had lived, if he had returned to office and worked out his design, the history of the world might have been very different. It is not necessary to doubt the wisdom of his advice in order to believe that things are better as they stand.

In 1766 Chatham had proposed to transfer the possessions of the East India Company to the Crown—just ninety years before the change was actually effected. This fact like the other illustrates the imperial breadth of a mind which, struggling against two mighty nations in almost every quarter of the globe, and making England (as he said in the last sentence which he uttered) the terror of the world, could face with equal calmness the acceptance of a new empire in the east and the federation of revolted colonies in the west. This also is an aspect of the later Whig tradition ; for the organization and government of our Greater Britain are questions bearing in a very direct manner upon the relations of England with foreign Powers. The ideas of the elder Pitt were such as bore fruit in after years if not at once, and his Whig idea of empire was destined to find development many decades later.

Lord Chatham had not been long in his grave when his second son began to make his mark in the House of Commons. William Pitt the younger began as a reformer and a financier. A Whig by training and introductions, he so far departed from his father's policy

as to ridicule the idea that any country could be permanently the enemy of another. But he clung to the orthodox creed of international combinations, and he would, if it had not been for a check in the House of Commons, have plunged us soon after his accession to office into a war with Russia.

Pitt's foreign policy nevertheless belongs to the Tory tradition, and may be dealt with elsewhere. After the death of his father no statesman of the highest rank sprang from the disorganised and divided Whig party for many years ; or at any rate no opportunity occurred during nearly half a century for the exercise of political generalship by a Whig. Under the obstinate personal rule of George the Third party distinctions had signified little : bribes and Court influence settled nearly everything. There were Rockingham Whigs, Bedford Whigs, and the few who remained constant to the great Commoner, even after he had done himself the injustice of entering the House of Lords. As the members of the body fell asunder, so the mind which had dominated the body was weakened and distracted. The Whig tradition was losing its homogeneity ; it was split up, complicated, confused. The younger Pitt, liberally as he regarded the French Revolution in its earlier phase, inclined gradually and conscientiously to the Tories, who had been growing in number and weight with the growing disorganization of their rivals. Fox, after dragging a section of the Whigs into a discreditable coalition with North, apparently for the sole purpose of securing the fruits of office, returned to the best precedents of the party of Walpole and Chatham. Burke, unduly magnifying the injustice of the French revolutionary Assembly towards the privileged orders, found himself warped from theoretical Liberalism into practical reaction.

Of these three, and of the rank and file of the great Whig party, Fox and his friends alone clung to the French Revolutionists after the death of Louis. The most powerful of the aristocratic families passed over to the side of Pitt in his great struggle with the Convention and the Directory. Whiggism was as inane in 1795 as Toryism had been inane in 1745. And yet it seems probable that the final judgment of history—for historians of the Revolutionary epoch are swaying to and fro to the present day—will decide that the instincts of Fox were just and rational, that Burke's denunciations worked incalculable mischief to his own country and to the world, and that Pitt's surrender of his opinions at the critical moment was a weakness for which England had to suffer an almost unendurable penalty.

III.

TORY TRADITIONS.

EVERY candid student of English history, especially if he be by education and conviction a Liberal in politics, is moved to sympathy by the attitude of the patriotic Tories early in the eighteenth century. Their position was extremely difficult. Favoured by Anne, sharing the credit of Marlborough's victories, they held office with a good prospect of continuance in power and influence ; but, on the other hand, they were placed between the horns of a fatal dilemma. The memories of the Stuart tyranny, of the crimes of James against the Constitution, and of the plots of the earlier Jacobites, were not to be shaken off : whilst the price of their possession of place was the active promotion of what they stigmatized as a Whig war. We cannot wonder that high-minded men like Lord Nottingham, more or less loyal to the Revolutionary settlement, though they might have welcomed the old dynasty back again, refused to occupy so equivocal a platform, and held aloof from office. The peculiarities of the situation if not their genuine convictions attached them warmly to a policy of peace, and in fact they were the steady advocates of peace throughout the reign of Queen Anne.

The Hanover Tories, as they were called after the accession of George the First, supported Walpole in his peaceful policy, being all the more disposed for peace with France in particular because they could not have

desired war without playing into the hands of the Stuart Tories. Many of the best men of this section were completely withdrawn from public life, for reasons such as the one just mentioned, and they did not again take a prominent part in politics until the Protestant succession was fully assured—until the last Jacobite rising had been suppressed with merciless rigour, which helped to make the Stuart cause almost fashionable again now that it had ceased to be menacing.

The accession of George the Third was in some sense a signal for the general return of the old Tories to public life. George was pleased to call himself a Whig; and the elder Pitt was unquestionably a Whig; and yet George hated and disgraced the Minister who had made England respected all the world over. It was on the basis of this petty hatred that the long-excluded party came once more to the front. They were the king's friends now, as their grandfathers had been the king's friends in the time of Charles and James. New Toryism took its stand between the platforms of the ablest and the feeblest Whigs.

It is a somewhat disgraceful scramble for place and patronage which presents itself to the sight of one who surveys the political arena in the first decade of George's reign. As soon as the king set up his standard on what was left of the royal prerogatives, and showed a disposition to be monarch in act as well as in name, crowds of supporters, sycophants, and parasites gathered round him. Amongst these were unscrupulous Whigs, resolved on clinging to power at any sacrifice of self-respect; and on the other hand there were the Tories, weak at first in number, but always gaining strength, and ready on occasion to strike an opportune bargain with the Whig place-hunters. Relying on his "friends," from whatever

quarter they might come, the king counterplotted Pitt, drove him from office, and shortly afterwards appointed the Marquis of Bute as his Minister, making it plainly understood that the chief exercise of power and dispensation of patronage were to remain in his own hands. Bute was pledged to peace—not because the people at large had emphatically demanded it, or because the strain of the military and naval expenditure had become intolerable, but apparently because war was Pitt's policy, and an old policy, and George had resolved to have a new policy of his own. The peace of Paris, in 1763, was made virtually at England's instance, and it involved the renunciation of some of the most valuable conquests of the past few years.

This was to all intents and purposes the close of the brilliant epoch whereof Pitt was the central figure, and wherein his "great Revolution families" had played an ornamental and a prosperous part. The people still worshipped Lord Chatham. Bute was hurled from power on the morrow of the peace by the storm of unpopularity which broke over him, and in spite of the royal favour. If the Whig party had been united, George would have been compelled to accept Chatham's terms, without which the latter wisely declined to take office. But the Whig party was hopelessly distracted. The families, indeed, were less particular than their former leader, and Grenville's sinister Administration was the result. The want of firmness and disinterestedness at this moment of the worst section of the oligarchical Whig families not merely ruined the party, but lost America, and plunged England into disaster and discredit.

The Administrations of Grenville, Grafton, and North existed on condition of being subservient to George the Third's caprices; and thus the real power of the State,

under the king, was in the hands of the courtiers and the Tories. These, then, are in great measure responsible for the external troubles of England during one of the darkest periods of her history since the Revolution ; and the truth of this is not disproved by the fact that the policy of the Government between 1768 and 1782 was in many respects opposed to what had hitherto been the tradition of the Tories, as it was opposed to the policy with which the king had originally set out.

The Tory tradition, such as it was, had been adroitly built up by Bolingbroke out of the materials of the ruined edifice of the Stuart dominion. Himself a thorough Jacobite, who suffered for his hopeless loyalty, St John saw that the principles of the party, if they were to be formulated in express terms, must be such as might be subscribed by men who, unlike himself, had abandoned the Stuarts and accepted the Revolution. They must have the appearance of conformity to the new order of things whilst really elastic enough to suit the creed and the aspirations of the most ardent Jacobite. His " Idea of a Patriot King " may be thus read between the lines from the first page to the last, and it was certainly not to the Hanoverian dogs (as Lord Beaconsfield described the second George) that he wished his readers to look for his typical monarch. The Bolingbroke system (in the words of the same writer) included " a real royalty, in lieu of the chief magistracy ; a permanent alliance with France, instead of the Whig scheme of viewing in that power the natural enemy of England ; and, above all, a plan of commercial freedom, the germ of which may be found in the long-maligned negotiations of Utrecht."

To this system in fact the Tories of the eighteenth century more or less consciously adhered ; though it may be questioned whether their struggle against Dutch

finance was at any time as genuine or as vigorous as their opposition to Venetian politics and French wars. The most notable of Bolingbroke's disciples in successive generations were men who began life as Whigs, and who either actually or virtually abandoned their party as their ideas matured. Lord Carteret, Secretary of State in 1742, was one of these; and it was his fate, as it was the fate of more than one statesman in after ages, to accept office for the purpose of carrying out a policy distinctly adverse to his opinions—Venetian, Dutch, and misogallic. His son-in-law Shelburne (afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne) was a supporter of Bute; and subsequently, in 1782, he had the satisfaction of displacing North in order to close the lamentable era of American war, and to conciliate a peace with France. The younger Pitt was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Shelburne's Administration; and the distinguishing features of his early policy as First Lord were his earnest desire to maintain peace with France and his enlightened efforts at financial reform.

The story of the French Revolution and of its effects upon English policy has been told so often, and told recently with so great pains to correct the mistakes of former judgments upon it, that something like an apology is due from any one who ventures on the well-beaten track. But the revolutionary epoch is a bridge of history without which all connection between the politics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would be lost, and it is impossible to dispense with an examination, however brief, of the acts and motives of Pitt and his contemporaries.

So far as France is concerned, the English party

traditions of foreign politics were practically determined at the close of the last century—first because party distinctions were almost confounded by the rapid succession of startling events, and next because there were henceforth two Frances which appealed to our sympathies and demanded our attention. Pitt, as we have seen, set out with a policy which was in one sense traditionally that of the Tories—a policy which he may have imbibed from Shelburne and inherited from Bolingbroke, but which at the same time was based on a national and a natural sentiment. Sympathy with a nation long oppressed, eaten up by incessant war and taxation, which now cast off its fetters and struck a heroic blow for liberty, stirred the heart of Pitt as it stirred the heart of the country. In 1789 there were few Englishmen who did not sympathise with the gathering of the States General, with the early action of that body, with the unification of the Assembly, and with the destruction of the Bastille.

As the Revolution proceeded, or rather as one revolution succeeded another in France, the opinions of politicians and private persons in this country naturally varied, and the most opposite views found expression and support, both in Parliament and amongst the general public. But it is very dangerous to attempt to fix, as some writers in our own day have attempted, the time when legitimate revolution ended and mere anarchy began. It is impossible to decide whether any particular leader or fomentor of an agitation in Paris or the provinces had or had not—or to what extent he had or had not—the sanction of his fellow-countrymen for the course which he pursued. It is still more idle to try and settle for other men the limits of their sympathies with the popular revolt, and to tell them at what point

they ought to draw a distinction between just rebellion and unscrupulous self-seeking. No doubt there is one great change and contrast in the conduct of the French people during the revolutionary epoch which does not leave much room for difference of opinion, and that is the change from the period of popular sovereignty, as practically established in 1789, to the period of imperial authority as conferred upon or usurped by Bonaparte. The advantages of the revolution were overbalanced by disadvantages when France had begun to wage wars of aggression, conquest, or mere military ambition ; but it is difficult to say at what moment this evil development should be held to have taken place.

Pitt saw the problem in its true light—as a question not of moral justification or turpitude (with which English statesmen had no concern), but of national internal development, to which a wise English statesman could not but wish well. As a Whig by extraction who had taken rather the Tory than the Whig view of England's foreign policy, he occupied a more neutral ground than his father, or than any of his prominent contemporaries might have been able to occupy. Regarding France (of course under the dominion of its kings) as a nation with whom it was possible and desirable for us to keep on good terms, he had a motive for wishing to see the return of Louis the Sixteenth to power, whatever guarantees the people might first exact for their new constitution. He would not feel this motive so strongly as the divine-right Tories. He may indeed have believed that a friendly France was just as possible and just as much to be desired with the people for sovereign as with one man. And it is certain that he felt a good will to the popular cause which was not felt (or was felt less sincerely) by many who agreed with his general policy.

It was of course the just and proper mode of conducting our relations with France at this critical period to leave her, as Pitt recommended, to arrange her internal affairs as she best could. We had no right to do anything else—not even to pelt our neighbours with rhetoric, as Burke pelted them in so disastrously effective a style. The revolution was no affair of ours; interference and preaching were alike out of place. As time went on, what with the clamour of the divine-right Tories and the hysterical outbreak of the rhetoricians, the work of Pitt became more and more difficult. Nothing could be nobler than the calmness and resolution with which for upwards of three years he restrained the passion of politicians, and strove to modify the action of the European Governments. A cruel fate eventually dragged him into the continental vortex, and made him an indifferent war Minister when his ambition had been to excel as a Minister of peace; but as long as he could stem the tide of international bad feeling he continued to do so. England moreover (in spite of Burke and his friends) was probably one at heart with Pitt, at any rate up to 1792, and before the hasty madness of the Jacobins had played into the hands of their enemies. It was not for England to quarrel with a revolution in France, barely a hundred years after a revolution of her own, from which she had reaped inestimable blessings. It was not for us to quarrel with a popular Government for imprisoning and beheading the king, who less than a century and a half before had summarily beheaded a king of our own. It was not our business to reprove or quarrel with the French for turning against foreign interference, even when they answered aggression with aggression. We had done much the same thing under the Commonwealth. But for the happy chance of England being an

island our own Cromwell might have been a Dumouriez, not to say a Bonaparte. It was not our duty or our interest to fight Republicans because their excited rulers urged other nations to seek liberty in their fashion. All these things happened in France, and yet Pitt would not move. He struggled bravely on, even with peace budgets and reduction of armaments and remission of taxes, hoping against hope that the sense of his fellow-countrymen would be with him; and when war did come it was on a declaration from France to England, and immediately after Pitt's urgent entreaty to the Convention to respect the independence of neighbouring States.

On the whole it seems that the inception of this war was not directly due to either of the two foreign policies which had so long found expression in England. But indirectly it may doubtless be attributed to the Tory policy of friendship for France under her kings, and to Tory sympathy with the exiled aristocracy and the suppressed Church. This is none the less true because Burke, so largely responsible for the early passion which tended to make peace impossible, and so reckless in his encouragement of the emigrant princes and nobles, was a Whig. The attachment to the Bourbons, the desire to avenge Louis and his Court, the dislike of revolutionary methods on the ground of principle—these were distinctly Tory ideas, such as had been dear to the hearts of the Jacobites and sacred in the philosophy of Bolingbroke and his school. It may be admitted on the other hand that the inveterate policy of the Whigs in regarding France as a natural enemy had prepared the soil in which this seed sprang up.

But, much as Pitt had tried to avoid war, and much as he was disposed at first to be what Lord Beaconsfield has called him, a democratic Minister, it is by no means

clear that he had acquitted himself of all responsibility for the desperate struggle of the next quarter of a century—assuredly the greatest calamity which has befallen England for more than two hundred years. After the Convention had declared war against us there may have been no looking back. But the bold and straightforward course would have been to acknowledge in a spirit of candour the right of the French nation to govern itself according to its own ideas. This was in accordance with England's best principles. Fox would have done it. Almost all the Whigs would have applauded the act, any time between 1789 and 1792. Pitt's father, Chatham, whom the Americans regarded as one of the makers of their liberties, would scarcely have refused to extend to his neighbours the sympathy which he had displayed in another hemisphere. In all the circumstances of the case an unreserved recognition of the government of the Convention would have cost Pitt a great effort, and might have further cost him the leadership of the Tory party. But it would have been right. It would have been a national and a popular policy. In all probability it would have saved the Republic; whilst it could not have opened the flood-gates of war as they were opened by the hostile combination of Europe against the French.

After war had broken out the majority of the Whigs fell in with the Tories. They had hitherto suffered Fox to be their spokesman, and stood by Pitt in his truly liberal policy; but now the banks and dykes were broken through, and the flood of exalted passion overwhelmed the whole field of English political life. Fox and his handful of adherents stood out, bold but isolated figures, in a weary waste of declamation and aggressive sentiment. With this exception Parliament almost forgot

that it included two opposing parties. With the exception of the Constitutional Clubs, the Corresponding Society, the half-dozen organs of English Jacobinism, the country might have been supposed to be entirely given over to one prevailing demand for war. And then followed, naturally enough, the enormous increase of the National Debt which cripples England to the present day, and the portentous loss of personal freedom which all but produced a revolt of our own proletariat in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The great personal ability of Pitt was displayed in the energy with which he threw himself into the struggle against France, rather than in the successes which he achieved ; for in spite of our great naval victories, and in spite of the vast sums of money which we had lavished on the Continent, we had very little to boast of at the peace of Amiens. The objects for which Europe had striven were not attained. France was not punished ; the Bourbons were not restored ; the Republican spirit was even more perilous for Governments and crowned heads than it had been in 1792. No doubt Pitt and his colleagues had done all that lay in their power ; and the people had paid fourfold taxes and subscribed immense loans with as much cheerfulness as could have been expected from them in the circumstances. But there had been no definite success, and the policy adopted in 1793 had not yet received its justification. On the contrary, England had recognised the Republic. We had been the active party in negotiating for a peace in 1796, as we were in arranging the peace of 1802. In 1796 Lord Malmesbury was sent to Paris with instructions to proffer the recognition of the Republic and the surrender of the French colonies, and to demand the withdrawal of the Republican armies from Italy and Holland.

And yet, shortly before this, Pitt had declared in the House of Commons his belief that if France were pressed hard on every side she would be compelled to sign such a peace as would secure Europe from Gallic aggression, and England from Republican innovation.

So near together come the boasts and the concessions of this most melancholy chapter of English history !

The result of the first three years of war had been to add a hundred millions to the Debt and four millions a year to the taxes. Much of this money had been spent in forming and nursing combinations ; yet Prussia remained doggedly at peace, Spain turned round upon us at a critical moment, and Ireland, already in revolt, was threatened by a large French army. Such was the state of affairs in 1796, when Fox could not muster sixty votes against the continuance of the war.

Pitt had thrown himself into the current, and had been borne along by the impetuous tide of passion. He had not merely been converted into an energetic war Minister ; he was also transformed into a restrictive, anti-popular, almost despotic instrument of the monarch who had hated and degraded his father. Ten years ago he had proposed Parliamentary reform, retrenchment, and an enlightened commercial legislation. The war had driven these good intentions out of his head, and we find him now, in 1796, bringing in bills to provide for the greater personal security of the king, and for the summary arrest of seditious speakers at public meetings. The "Pitt and Grenville Acts," as they were called at the time, which were vehemently but unsuccessfully resisted by Fox, passed the two Houses by larger majorities than those which had declared for the continuance of war, and the minority could think of no better protest against them than withdrawal from the House of Com-

mons. This course, however injudicious, cannot fairly be said to have been dictated (in the words of some critics) by spite or disappointment. It was a mark of extreme reprobation of acts which unquestionably deserved to be condemned; and it indicated the fervour of the small Parliamentary minority at this turning-point of the struggle.

Fox and his friends were morally stronger than their numbers in the House would imply. Inarticulate England was behind: the England which was obstinately excluded from the franchise, which was deemed seditious because it was unrepresented, which bore the burden of a war whilst it ardently desired peace. For whatever may have been the state of public opinion in 1793, and however sincerely a majority of Englishmen may have detested the proceedings of the French Jacobins, there was abundant reason in 1796 to believe that the masses were heartily sick of the war, and that they would willingly have withdrawn all pretensions to intermeddle in the affairs of France.

The first Administration of Pitt was brought to a close in March, 1801, after a duration of seventeen years; and though the ostensible reason of his retirement was his inability to emancipate the Irish Catholics, the real reason is much more likely to have been the accumulation of difficulties in the struggle against France, the break-up of the European coalition, and the pressure of the popular demand for peace. He resumed office in 1804, again as a war Minister, and with an exclusively Tory Cabinet. The Toryism of Pitt and the special responsibility of the Tory party for the renewed war are alike signalled by the formation of this Cabinet; just as

the joint responsibility of the Whigs is signalised by the Coalition Ministry formed after the death of Pitt in 1809, which included Fox and Erskine, Grenville, Spencer, and Windham, and, of the Tories, Sidmouth and one or two of his former colleagues.

Another fact is indicated by this Ministry of "all the Talents," and it is the entire confusion—at any rate for the time—of the old Whig and Tory traditions of foreign policy. These traditions, as already said, had been merged in the new national interests created by the European war. With the collapse of the French kingdom the train of ideas based on the circumstances of the seventeenth century had come to an end. It was no longer a question as to whether France was or was not our natural enemy. No doubt the bricks of the old edifice had been used in constructing the edifice which was to take its place, but in addition to these there were new bricks. Other and yet busier hands were engaged in moulding and firing the clay; the Peoples had begun to build for themselves. If Governments, Ministers, politicians of the old school, failed to see the change or refused to recognise it, so much the worse for them, as was shortly to appear; but the change had taken place. To discerning eyes there could be no more convincing demonstration of the fact than the uncertain conduct of English statesmen on both sides between 1790 and 1822, when the policy of this country in regard to Europe at large was one of constant impulse rather than principle, when diplomacy had become second-rate intrigue, and when success at foreign courts had come to mean little more than the purchase of alliances by the money of the English taxpayer. The events of this period are seen in the refracting light which precedes a new dawn—the images are broken, the outlines blurred, the colours con-

founded. Thus we have seen at least three sections of the Whigs professing three different political creeds. We have seen Tories given up to Dutch finance and French wars—though they were at the same time sufficiently orthodox to avoid the Venetian heresy. And indeed George the Third was not a mere doge like his grandfather and great-grandfather. He had done his best to obey his mother's precept and "be a king;" and, thanks to him and to the long anti-republican war, the nineteenth century opened with a fair prospect for England of once more re-conquering the divine-right seventeenth-century long-Parliament and patriot-king principle. An energetic monarch with lucid intervals, and a new tradition of foreign policy admirably calculated to convert republics into military despotisms—these two things combined had brought us to such a pitch that progressive legislation was almost entirely suspended—that even Fox regarded an extension of the franchise as inopportune—that a Whig Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1806 thought it impossible for England long to continue paying the interest on its enormous debt.

Over this state of affairs the Tory party presided with little intermission. Fox and his colleagues were unceremoniously dismissed in 1807, and from that time for something like twenty years the Duke of Portland and his Tory successors had undisputed control of the Administration. It is true that in 1812, after the assassination of Perceval, the House of Commons voted an address to the Prince Regent praying him to select a Cabinet from the ablest men of all parties. The Prince acceded to this request, and a coalition Ministry would have been formed but for an insuperable difficulty which arose in connection with the officers of the royal house-

hold. It was a difficulty of a most curious kind. The Whigs insisted, on principle no doubt, that the appointments of the chief officers should be vacated as a necessary consequence of the change of Ministry. The Tories maintained that this was a matter touching the comfort and dignity of the monarch (in this instance of the Regent); and they refused to concede the point. The chief officers themselves afterwards declared that they had intended to resign as soon as a new Cabinet had been formed. But the upshot of the matter was that the negotiations fell through, and Lord Liverpool was charged with the task of constructing a Tory Administration. On such a question as this the fate of an empire might have turned.

Would the accession to power at this moment of Lords Grey and Grenville, with other prominent Whigs, have much affected the course of events? It is unlikely, and least likely of all so far as the war is concerned. In the summer of 1812 things were moving on the Continent very much by their own weight, and no First Lord, no Foreign Minister in Lord Castlereagh's place, would have ventured to withdraw from the conflict. The address to the Regent had passed by four votes, and that no doubt was a triumph for the Whigs. But there was no majority which would have supported them in the event of a rupture with the Tories; and if they had by any means got the upper hand in the Ministry their fate would certainly before long have been the fate of Fox in 1807. It had become plain enough that the Tory leaders had little to fear so long as George the King and George the Gentleman were alive.

It has indeed been argued that, but for this rehearsal of the Bedchamber Plot, a vital change in the government and policy of the country would have taken place.

“The expulsion of the French from the Peninsula,” says Alison, “the catastrophe of Moscow, the resurrection of Europe, were on the eve of commencing when the continued fidelity of England to the cause of freedom hung on the doubtful balance of household appointments. If a change of Ministry had taken place at that time, the destinies of the world would probably have been changed. The Whigs, fettered by their continued protestations against the war, could not with any regard to consistency have prosecuted it with vigour.” If this were so, and if Lords Grey and Grenville sacrificed what they regarded as sacred interests for a point of etiquette or a matter of patronage, an indelible stain would rest on their honour and on the credit of their party. But it is to be observed that the issue was not between a Tory and a Whig Administration. All that was offered to the Whigs was a few places in a Cabinet which would undoubtedly have remained Tory in influence—which at any rate would have been pledged to continue the war. If the leaders who had pleaded most earnestly for peace had had the remotest chance in 1812 of securing the acceptance of their policy, they would have grasped it at any cost. If it had been possible by assuming or sharing responsibility at that crisis to give satisfaction to the very strong peace party in the country, and if it could have been known beforehand that such a course would have prevented the Russian campaign and the terrible slaughter of the Hundred Days (though it would not have prevented the fall of Bonaparte), Lord Grey and his friends would not have shirked their duty.

Peace had by this time become the recognised policy of the Whig party, as war had long been the recognised policy of their rivals; and if the external conditions had remained constant for some time longer it seems proba-

ble that the policy of peace would have prevailed. Not that Bonaparte would necessarily have won his desperate game, or that England would have been content to see him wielding a despotic sway over a large portion of Europe. But peace might have effected in another fashion what was actually achieved by war. Napoleon Bonaparte was reaching the limits of his power in 1812, and the Russian expedition itself was undertaken in great measure to counteract the Emperor's growing unpopularity at home. France had been almost surfeited with glory, and it was as much as the Emperor could do to obtain fresh levies for his armies. There had never been a more opportune moment for coming to peaceful and honourable terms with the French nation ; but Liverpool and Castlereagh were not the men to set the policy of conciliation on foot.

It would be unjust to estimate the policy of the Whigs at this season from the point of view created by our military triumphs in 1815. We must transfer ourselves to the platform of 1812, and put ourselves in the place of the advocates of peace at that particular crisis. We shall then have no difficulty in acknowledging the sincerity of their patriotism, or in discerning the lines on which their later traditions of foreign policy have been framed. We shall see that the same spirit guided them for the most part in dealing with foreign affairs which has always since the Revolution guided them in dealing with domestic affairs. And if it be necessary by way of comparison to regard the aristocratic Tories and Whigs as competing with each other for popular favour and support in England, it must be conceded to the Whigs that they have founded their claims during the present century on their traditional approximation to that section of the people which has most acutely suffered by our

ruinous war expenditure, and which has most earnestly demanded a policy of peace.

Lords Liverpool and Castlereagh, who are chiefly associated with the Tory Administration of 1812-22, were happy in the circumstances which placed them at the head of affairs at the moment when the star of Bonaparte had begun to set. The causes which in 1814 made the entry of the Allies into Paris comparatively easy were already potentially in existence when Liverpool was charged with the formation of his Ministry, and when Castlereagh took his place at the Foreign Office. So far as the war was concerned, and the re-establishment of affairs on the Continent, Lord Castlereagh was the directing spirit of English policy. It was he who refused the French terms of peace in 1812, who alienated Denmark in 1813 by engaging to transfer Norway to the Swedish crown, who most firmly insisted on the restoration of all the old dynasties, who made his personal influence prevail in the councils of the Sovereigns at Bar-sur-Aube and Chatillon, who took exception to the feeble Treaty of 1814, and ably represented the English Government at Vienna.

The gist of the Tory policy at the conclusion of this long and calamitous struggle may be found in the instructions given to Castlereagh when he was appointed plenipotentiary at Chatillon; but of course as a leading member of the Cabinet he had himself assisted in drawing up the programme of his action. These instructions professed to be based on the unchanged demands of England since the beginning of the war with France—the retirement of the French armies within their old boundaries, the restoration of the ancient rights of the various countries of Europe, and the provision of “security for the future.” They did not put forward the restora-

tion of the former French dynasty as a necessary condition of agreement; and it is noteworthy that this condition had never been openly made by the English Cabinet, from 1792 to 1814. But in almost every document drawn up and published by our Government a desire was expressed for this restoration, in terms well calculated to set the French people against the notion of a settlement. Thus in 1800 Lord Grenville wrote to Talleyrand—"His majesty makes no claim to prescribe to France what should be the form of her government, or in whose hands she shall vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation;" but in the same document he wrote—"The best and most natural pledge of the abandonment by France of those gigantic schemes of ambition by which the very existence of society in the adjoining States has so long been menaced would be the restoration of that line of princes which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home and consideration and respect abroad. Such an event would alone have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace. . . . It would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, that security which they are now compelled to seek by other means."

Talleyrand must have smiled at the idea of "prosperity at home and consideration and respect abroad," under Louis the Fourteenth, for instance; and he must have laughed to hear this eulogy on the Bourbon kings from an English Minister.

There can be little doubt that this constant harping on the advantages of a restoration would at all times create a difficulty in the way of peace. Negotiations on the basis of an acknowledgment of the Republic would

probably have succeeded with the Directory, if not with the First Consul. But the Tory policy of England, admitted or implied, was to destroy the Republic. The war was originally waged against the republican propaganda, which had grievously alarmed the English king and his Ministers. The great distinction between Tories and Whigs—at any rate the great distinction between the prosecutors of the war and those who opposed it—was that the former were smitten with panic and fired with animosity, and resolved to kill the French Republic at any conceivable cost, whilst the latter were at all times willing to act on the first and truest policy of Pitt—to leave France to settle her internal affairs as she best could.

The continuation of the Tory management of foreign affairs after the Congress of Vienna bears witness to the survival of the party traditions in two senses. There were the traditions of the old divine-right party, champions of royalty, defenders of ancient privilege, opponents on principle and with rare exceptions of popular emancipation; and there were further the traditions of method and of alliance, growing out of the six great coalitions against Bonaparte. The Congress had, on the whole, done a just and necessary work, but its decisions were not all founded on the strictest principles of justice. It had in profession and theory replaced the former landmarks, but there had been departures from the rule. The new map of Europe was in some respects arbitrary; the Great Powers had made and taken “compensations,” which had no sanction but their own will, and no justification but by the right of possession and force. In order to give each other a guarantee of their

gains, and at the same time to provide against any possible recrudescence of the revolutionary spirit in Europe—crushed out for the present by the oppressive weight of war—they entered into an agreement pledging them to meet from time to time by common consent, to discuss important matters of European concern, and particularly to concert measures for the suppression of revolutionary movements. That this was their special and primary design is manifest not so much from the wording of the various treaties signed by the monarchs and plenipotentiaries at Paris as from the spirit of the whole negotiation, and the character of the Congresses which afterwards met. The first of these was appointed for the year 1818, but the most memorable are the two which were subsequently held at Laybach and Verona.

The sublimation of the intermeddling system of foreign policy—from which gigantic evils, and here and there an advantage, have accrued to the States subjected to its influence—was attained in the Holy Alliance, signed in 1815 between the monarchs of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, and assented to by the other Continental Powers. This mystical (and it may not be unfair to call it a mystifying) treaty was regarded with jealousy and dislike by all that was liberal in England; and fortunately the constitution had prevented the Regent from setting his hand to the document. Castlereagh nevertheless expressed his qualified approval of it; and perhaps his common sense is more strongly impeached by this approval than the quality of his statesmanship. The treaty—which seems to have been the suggestion of a female Russian fanatic, adopted and carried out by the Czar—was on the face of it a piece of politico-religious philadelphia, stuffed with devotional fervour which

suspicious men did not hesitate to call hypocrisy, but which may after all have been only self-deception. The secular gist of the Holy Alliance—for it had a secular phrase wrapped up in its Christian verbiage—was simply this:—"The sole principle in vigour, either between the said Governments or among their subjects, shall be the determination to render each other reciprocal aid, and to testify by continued good deeds the unalterable mutual affection by which they are animated."

The Holy Alliance proved to be infinitely more injurious in its application than in its inception; though it is clearly against the interests of mankind that the governments of great military Powers should engage in the name of religion to render each other mutual aid. The natural result of such a compact was that a nation struggling for its liberty, and working out its development within its own borders, might instantly be coerced into submission to a hated tyranny by the forces of alien States. And this, in fact, was what actually happened in the case of Naples and Spain in 1820 and 1822. The Czar, to whom the Holy Alliance owed its existence, called for a Congress of the Powers, which accordingly met at Troppau at the end of 1820, and adjourned to Laybach in the following January. The decision formed at Troppau and carried out at Laybach concisely expresses the practical realisation of Madame Krudener's mysticism. It was agreed by the Powers—Russia, Austria, and Prussia, with France and England at any rate sanctioning the proceeding by the presence of their representatives—that though the spirit of the age demanded liberal institutions, these institutions must come as a gift from the sovereign, of his own free will; that the Neapolitans and Spaniards had presumed to acquire them for themselves; and that consequently the revolutionists must be put

down by force. Accordingly an Austrian army was sent into Naples, as in the following year a French army was allowed to go into Spain, and the liberties of these two countries, which might otherwise have been secured, were crushed out at the moment of attainment by the simple fiat of three despotic sovereigns.

Had the English Government any right to be represented at Troppau and Laybach? According to our notions of to-day, decidedly not. The only excuse which can be made for Sir Charles Stewart's presence at Troppau is that the Grand Alliance was not yet practically dead—that the English Cabinet did not wish abruptly to withdraw from the concert established seven or eight years before, and that our ambassador, though he attended the Congress, formally demurred to its decision. Notwithstanding this, it would have been a bolder and more honest course to hold aloof altogether. England had been unable, on account of the fundamental principles of her constitution (as Lord Castlereagh admitted), to join herself to the Holy Alliance. These Congresses were summoned on the basis of that Alliance, and there was therefore a good and sufficient reason for abstention. There was also another reason amply strong—the pronounced dislike of the English people for the Holy Alliance and its unholy work.

The death of Lord Londonderry in 1822 marks a term in the foreign policy of England. Canning, his successor at the Foreign Office, was a man of very different sentiment and spirit. Though he had undertaken to carry on the traditions by which his predecessor had been governed, and which had been reduced to writing as a guide for the future, he soon displayed the force of his own character and genius. Perhaps the most liberal act of the whole of Castlereagh's life was his statement of

England's position in regard to the Congress of Laybach. Apart from his attitude on this occasion, his policy was consistently restrictive and anti-revolutionary, whilst he had come to be one of the most heartily abused statesmen in England. Canning was from first to last assured of popular sympathy, and much of his official action was essentially Liberal in its character. He stands out prominently at a very important crisis in our national history; but his foreign policy looked to the future rather than to the past—was experimental rather than traditional—and had its root in popular desires and convictions rather than in the schemes of statesmen and the documents of the Foreign Office.

IV.

POPULAR TRADITIONS.

LORD CASTLEREAGH, in a Circular Note addressed to our representatives at the foreign courts in January 1821, explaining his inability to concur in the decisions of the Congress of Laybach, pointed out that the scheme of intervention in Italy for the purpose of suppressing the Neapolitan revolt was "diametrically opposed to the fundamental laws of Great Britain." And at a previous date, the principles of the Holy Alliance having been impugned by Brougham in Parliament, he admitted that the Prince Regent had been precluded by the Constitution from becoming a party to this agreement.

What, then, were the unwritten laws of this country which made such an alliance with the Eastern despotisms impossible for us? What was the traditional spirit of our Constitution which happily preserved us from participating in so great an outrage on the liberties of other nations? What prevented the enthusiastic Foreign Minister of a Tory Government from acting in concert with England's allies?

The saving fact was nothing more nor less than this—that our national edifice is based and built up on revolution; that its foundation and corner stones are resistance to oppression and the forcible exaction of free institutions from reluctant monarchs and governments. It was impossible for King George or Lord Castlereagh to put his hand to a document declaring that the admission of the

people to power must be a spontaneous grace of the sovereign, because every chapter of English history shows that the acknowledgment of our rights has been forced upon our monarchs by their subjects. The nobles began it for us when they broke their own feudal bonds without specially consulting either their lord paramount or their inferiors. The Estate of the Commons were no sooner gathered in council than they carried on the work of emancipation, and made of their taxes an instrument against which the king was never able to contend for many years at a time. And the people at large soon followed suit, wresting their liberty piecemeal from king and lords and Commons as occasion served, or as dire necessity urged them. The movement was always from below upwards—by violent upheaval and not by condescending grace. The royal goodwill was a royal accommodation to circumstances. Honest and consecrated revolution was the actual lever by which the people of this country made themselves free.

However it may have been up to the end of the Stuart tyranny—however much Bolingbroke and his school may have tried to persuade themselves that the restoration of Charles the Second had wiped out the stigma of the Puritan ascendancy—there is no sober doubt as to the thoroughly revolutionary character of the Constitution after the compact of 1688. The arrangement between William of Orange and the lords who fetched him over, and between William and Mary and the Parliament of 1689, was simply a business-like contract, by which divine right was finally negated, and hereditary right was overruled. A throne-market was set up: the people sold and William bought a crown. Henceforth we were to date our liberties from a pronunciamiento of the aristocracy and a revolt of the army, from a

Dutch invasion and a declaration of rights. There was no escape from this logical conclusion except for those who contended that the people at large, mainly inarticulate at that moment, had no part in the contract, and that they had the right to overturn it. This in fact has been the argument and the theory of many inflexible Tories; but it was not the argument of the Government in 1815. And it is not the argument of any statesman, whatever his party, who comprehends the genius of his country and the conditions of its development.

The conduct of the English Ministry in holding aloof from the Holy Alliance and declining to take part in the interventions which sprang out of it was much criticised at the time by Russian and German writers, as well as by a small section of the majority at home. It was urged that the action of Pitt and his colleagues in 1793 and the action of Lord Liverpool and his colleagues in 1821 were inconsistent, whilst the Continental Powers had every right to expect that the policy of the former crisis would have been maintained by the more distinctly Tory Government which had assisted in shaping the treaties of 1815. But it is manifest that the grounds of intervention were very different in the two cases. Whatever may be thought of the justification for any or all of the coalitions against France, they were formed to ward off a real danger to Europe, whereas there was no real danger in 1821 for any interests, monarchical or other, outside the borders of Italy and Spain. No propaganda was menaced from either of these countries, and it is difficult to believe that the Eastern Powers (great as their reason was for timidity) could have seriously anticipated one. But the French propaganda had been active and formidable, especially from the year 1792, and the Republican armies had shown themselves quite

capable of making good the threats of the Convention. So far as England was concerned she had been extremely unwilling to fight the Republic, and the war broke out on the declaration of France. It was an absurdity to suppose that either Spain or Naples or Piedmont would wage war upon England, or that these countries would have the power, even if they had the will, to disturb the peace of united Europe.

Now it is scarcely necessary to point out that the influence which saved us from war in 1821 was not the influence of any traditional foreign policy, and least of all the influence of the Tory tradition. The systematic policies of the past century and a quarter had been built up more or less upon coalitions with European States for the maintenance of the balance of power. Nearly all our wars had been undertaken for this purpose, or as the result of an enmity created or nursed by this unreasonable view of our international position. Such systems and such traditions would clearly not have sufficed to guard us against a coalition at Laybach or Verona. That which did save us and guard us at this period was the revolutionary character which our forefathers had impressed upon the State, and the tradition of sympathy with oppressed peoples which we had inherited even from the days of Elizabeth and of Cromwell. We had aided foreign Protestants in securing freedom ; we had conceded liberty to the American colonists as a right conquered by violence ; and it was felt to be absolutely impossible after such precedents that an English Minister, be he ever so anxious to retain the friendship of the king's allies, should consent to take part in suppressing a revolution in another State.

Here then we have a national tradition of foreign policy—a tradition which had not grown up in courts and cabinets, which had not derived itself from a dynasty, or an alliance, or a “natural enemy” or friend, but which was part and parcel of the national character, as necessary to Englishmen as the spirit and resolution which had won them their domestic liberties. It may not be an absolute necessity that men determined to be free should also determine that the people of other States should gain their freedom; though if there be such an absolute rule it will account amongst other things for the tendency to propaganda observed in many free nations. It is enough to note as a fact that there has long been amongst us this ardent sympathy with struggling peoples—that it has on many occasions been a potent influence for ourselves and for others—that it is by this time a clearly recognised tradition of our foreign policy—and that it is a tradition identified with the national character, and not with either of the systems elaborated by the great political parties.

If the mass of the English people had been in possession of power, or if they had had their due share of power during several generations, the policy which is essentially national and popular would have been systematized, and it also like the other two would have achieved its roll of splendid triumphs. As it is, the triumphs of popular sentiment are sufficiently great and glorious, but they are not triumphs of a system. They have been isolated, they have not hitherto availed to build up a strong, compact, definite foreign policy; or, if the policy has at length been established, it is only in our own generation, and it has scarcely conquered for itself a place in history. Single traditions no doubt have a history of their own; but the edifice of traditions

such as may constitute a system is at most a construction of to-day. The tradition of ardent and somewhat aggressive sympathy with nationalities struggling to be free—which forbids our statesmen to take the side of the oppressor and occasionally compels him to take the side of the oppressed—is amply and gloriously illustrated in the annals of Great Britain. We owe the credit of more than one chivalrous intervention between tyrants and their victims to the spirit of militant Protestantism; for a nation did not cast off the yoke of Rome without taking a sword in its hands, and the common effort against the common persecution made it possible, if not indispensable, for the strong to come to the aid of the weak. The patronage of Protestants in the Low Countries by Elizabeth and the exaction of toleration for the Waldenses by Cromwell are notable instances of practical English sympathy for the oppressed on the score of religion. Nearer to our own times, the frequent interventions of our Government—at the instance of public opinion—in behalf of Greeks, of Syrians, of Poles, and of Slavs, afford ample evidence of the existence of this very effectual sentiment of universal freedom in the English mind.

Closely allied with this traditional motive is another, equally powerful, more practical, and exercising a wider influence over the nation as a whole. This also is ardent and aggressive; this also is essentially characteristic of the people, and has more than once or twice imposed action on Ministers of either party, engaged the efforts of diplomacy, and incited national wars. It is the motive of an industrious and commercial country, anxious to establish in all parts of the world new markets for its trade, new commercial centres, new alliances or monopolies as outlets to its superabundant energy. It is not

altogether or of necessity a selfish instinct which has led the English people to cover the surface of the globe with a network of dependencies and colonies, of open ports and guaranteed harbours ; but no doubt the constructive selfishness of industry and enterprise is the spur which has driven us to plant our standards of trade in every productive clime, and which has placed our whole power of attack and defence at the disposal of our merchants.

The line of contact between the two motives above mentioned is to be found in the desire to surround ourselves with independent nations which, being free as we are free, may serve as bulwarks and buttresses of our own power, and, being industrious as we are industrious, may add to our commercial stability. This motive, the resultant force of the other two, has been rather instinctive than clearly defined in the past, but it is probably destined to be the most precise tradition in the system of national foreign policy which is gradually displacing the systems of other days. It is a motive in every sense worthy of a free and generous people, being equally devoid of the quixotism which would make us an indiscriminate champion of the oppressed and of the selfishness which would lead us to profit ourselves at the expense of the rest of mankind. In the strengthening and confirmation of this tendency we are able to perceive the harmonization of two traditions apparently irreconcilable—and not only apparently irreconcilable but actually antagonistic in spirit and operation. The tradition which cast its influence upon us when in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries we (often unscrupulously) endeavoured to oust the Spaniards from their monopolies in South America and the West Indies is assuredly hard to reconcile with the tradition which caused us, at about the same times, to sacrifice life and

treasure in defending the Protestants on the Continent. The tradition exemplified in the arbitrary establishment of our factories on the Indian Coast, and in plundering and outraging the native races, is scarcely one in kind with the tradition which constrained us to emancipate our own slaves, and to exert pressure on other nations in order to induce them to take a like course. The history of the present generation will be full of similar contrasts ; for the national desire to aid struggling nationalities and to promote the cause of universal freedom operates side by side with the keen determination to find a field for British commerce in every inhabited country.

As it is certain that neither the one tradition nor the other is in the meantime failing in vigour—as in fact both motives grow stronger amongst us year by year—it is in the highest degree satisfactory that they should exhibit this tendency to a mutual modification of form, and that, whilst the sentiment of popular emancipation becomes more and more practical, the instinct of commercial aggression is chastened by a stronger respect for justice. The tendency in question was aptly illustrated at one and the same moment in the spring of 1881, by the common sense and moral courage which liberated Thessaly without a blow and reverted to a policy of just dealing in the Transvaal.

There is a warning as well as a consolation in the check which the more generous policy is putting upon the more unscrupulous one ; for manifestly they are not always the same body of Englishmen who are obedient to these two traditions, and particular cases must arise in which the advocates of an aggressive policy will find themselves practically opposed by men of the other way of thinking, from whence grave evils may befall the State. Within the memory of living men there have

been several critical instances of this antagonism of ideas and interests—an antagonism severe and bitter whilst it endures, and bringing at least the semblance of humiliation upon us as a military Power, but nevertheless a prelude to harmony in the not far-distant future when public opinion on these points shall be definitely formed. Twice has an English aggression on Afghanistan, undertaken by Anglo-Indians with a view to strengthening the north-western frontier, and so (in their judgment) consolidating an empire based on commercial development, been repudiated and reversed at home. On both occasions we had suffered disaster in the first place, whereby the repudiation was made infinitely more difficult for statesmen and soldiers; but on both occasions we had first restored the military position and vindicated ourselves by force of arms, so that we might undoubtedly have held the country if we had wished. But the Englishmen who considered that the primary duty of all was to be upright and moral, and that an immoral act such as the invasion of Afghanistan ought to be undone at any cost of pride and credit, were shown (especially in 1880) to be in the majority, and their will prevailed in spite of the most spirited protests of the other party. It was the same with the repudiation of the Transvaal aggression, which, unfortunately delayed until after the shedding of blood, was still in a very real sense the work of Englishmen who would not consent to ratify a transaction based on injustice and greed.

It is needless to say that these renunciations of conquest and revindications of national morality are not to be desired on their own account, or for any profit or advantage which they bring to the empire. If it is well not to keep a territory which has been gained by more or less unscrupulous public servants, it would be de-

cidedly better not to have taken such territory at all, and not to have left a system in operation by which individual men may at any time arrogate to themselves the power to act unjustly in the name of their country. And if national morality needs to be strongly asserted, this might surely be done most reasonably by limiting the irresponsibility of our proconsuls, and by avoiding the entrance to transactions which the public conscience is likely to disavow. It is not by such acts as the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the retrocession of the Transvaal that Englishmen should rejoice to prove their moral strength, but rather by cultivating a public opinion and a system of policy in which there should be no place for aggression, whether authorised or unauthorised by the Government.

A distinction may fairly be drawn between the aggressive policy of individuals or particular Ministries and the aggressive commercial tradition of the nation at large ; for the one does not necessarily arise out of the other, and there is no reason why the follies and crimes of every public servant should be attributed to an inherent vice of the national character. The aggression concocted by a Government, or by a Viceroy and his council, or by a military clique, is usually undertaken for certain political ends, for the achievement of brilliant triumphs bringing promotions or prolongation of office in their train ; and these ends are distinctly and clearly vulgar. Against aggression of this kind the nation has undoubtedly declared itself, and it is improbable that we shall ever again be launched into wars of military aggression. The people have already condemned and renounced them ; and we may be sure that as the de-

mocracy advances in dignity and self-respect it will be less than ever disposed to sanction a war for the removal of our neighbours' landmarks. But the aggressive tradition which in other days led our merchants to extend the sphere of their enterprise without much scruple was in a way more respectable, because it partook of the nature of ordinary competition in industrial pursuits, and was rarely in the first instance anything more than an arbitrary demand for freedom of commerce. This tradition also is tending to become obsolete amongst us, partly perhaps because we have already covered the inhabited area of the world with our network of trade, but chiefly because we are developing a courageous belief in the greater efficacy of legitimate, honest, peaceful extension.

There are those who contend that the policy of aggression has never in any case brought us even a material and sordid benefit. Not only, they say, is the policy immoral, whether its objects be political or commercial, but it is not and cannot be successful. It may give employment to the army and navy—but the men had better be adding to the wealth of their country by peaceful labours. It may, as in the case of India, open up a lucrative career for a vast number of Englishmen—but there is room at home for as many able-bodied men as England can produce, and the conquest of great dependencies like India simply creates lucrative employment for members of the well-to-do classes at the expense of the British taxpayer.

Mr Bright developed this argument in a striking passage of the first speech delivered by him to his constituents at Birmingham; and it would perhaps be impossible to find anywhere else a more forcible exposition, in a few words, of the contention that aggressive wars cannot de-

velop the commercial interests of the nation. "I am inclined to think," he said, "that with the exception of Australia there is not a single dependency of the Crown which, if we come to reckon what it has cost in war and protection, would not be found to be a positive loss to the people of this country. Take the United States, with which we have such an enormous and constantly increasing trade. The wise statesmen of the last generation, men whom your school histories tell you were statesmen, serving under a monarch who, they tell you, was a patriotic monarch, spent £130,000,000 of the fruits of the industry of the people in a vain—happily a vain—endeavour to retain the colonies of the United States in subjection to the monarchy of England. Add up the interest of that £130,000,000 for all this time, and how long do you think it will be before there will be a profit on the trade with the United States which will repay the enormous sum we invested in a war to retain those States as colonies of this empire? It never will be paid off. Wherever you turn you will find that the opening of markets, developing of new countries, introducing cotton cloth with cannon balls, are vain, foolish, and wretched excuses for wars, and ought not to be listened to for a moment by any man who understands the multiplication table, or who can do the simplest sum in arithmetic. Since the 'Glorious Revolution,' since the enthronisation of the great Norman territorial families, they have spent in wars, and we have worked for, about £2,000,000,000. The interest on that is £100,000,000 per annum, which alone, to say nothing of the principal sum, is three or four times as much as the whole amount of your annual export trade from that time to this. Therefore, if war has provided you with a trade, it has been at an enormous cost; but I think it is

by no means doubtful that your trade would have been no less in amount and no less profitable had peace and justice been inscribed on your flag instead of conquest and love of military renown." Meanwhile, whether we were at peace or whether we were at war, our public debt continually increased. Whatever the increase of our population, of our machinery, of our industry or our wealth, still the National Debt went on increasing. "Although we have not a foot more territory to conserve, or an enemy in the world who dreams of attacking us, we find that our annual military expenses during the last twenty years"—this was spoken in 1858—"have risen from £12,000,000 to £22,000,000."

The great progress of public opinion in this direction since Mr Bright uttered these words is an evidence not so much of the personal influence of the speaker—though that influence could not easily be exaggerated—as of a reaction and return to the accepted doctrines of the days of Walpole. Walpole, as we have seen, clung to peace at almost any price. He laboured to show the country, and he did show it very successfully, how our national wealth and industries might be developed by peace instead of by war, and he would never consent, until the intrigues of his rivals and the madness of the people forced his hands, to adopt the barbarous method against which his judgment protested. The national and popular tradition of peaceful commercial development had scarcely come into existence in the eighteenth century. Walpole was one of its originators, and as such he stands out of the line of the Whig and Tory exponents of foreign policy. In the meantime the national and popular tradition of commercial development by aggression was in full force, and it was a gust of passion generated by this tradition which drove Walpole into

the Spanish war of 1739. A century and a quarter after the fall of Walpole, aided by the lessons of the forty years' peace, and the deep misgivings excited by the Crimean war, Englishmen had begun to recognise a newer and better way, and to discern the outlines of the nobler system which their forefathers had been building up for them.

On the whole it seems reasonable to conclude that the temper of the English people in regard to questions of foreign policy has been developed from its best and most generous traditions. At any rate the process is in operation, and the chronicle of events from year to year attests the fact. Of the aspects of what has been shown to be in the present age the national policy of dealing with international affairs something further must be said hereafter in a different connection ; but in the meantime it is interesting to observe how steadily and logically the development just mentioned has been carried on during the past hundred years.

The popular sympathy with struggling nationalities (which combines with the cultivation of an industrious peace to constitute what is likely to be England's foreign policy in the future) received a notable stimulation towards the close of the last century. The revolutionary epoch from which the present political liberties of so many European peoples trace their origin gave to England less in the shape of political liberty than it gave to some other nations, whose need of liberty was greater ; but still the boons which it conferred upon us were neither few nor slight. Amongst them was a firmer conviction and a clearer demonstration of the rights of communities to self-government, and especially the right of a nation to take its affairs into its own hands. The success of the French outbreak had given a sanction

to revolution, and the fairly judicious behaviour of the leaders during the first three years gained for the movement a certain kind of acceptance even amongst Tory politicians. In England it was of course rather a question of fellow-feeling for revolutionists by revolutionists than one of astonished admiration for a new departure in history. We too had had our rebellions, had dethroned our kings, and established Parliamentary supremacy. We too, both at home and in America, had crowned successful revolt. We were before and not behind the French in adapting old methods to new needs and circumstances—before and not behind them in making revolution respectable; but perhaps for this very reason we looked on at the convulsions of our neighbours with the deepest interest.

It is impossible that we in our generation should be able to realise the intense sympathy felt by our grandfathers with the French people—with Assembly, Convention, and Directory—in their efforts to establish a solid Republic, in the thoroughness of their creed, and in the heroic struggle of the *sans-culottes* against the armies of monarchical Europe. There can be no doubt whatever that this great spectacle, which was in itself a political education, drew out and confirmed our traditional preference for the revolutionary mode of national progress, and added strength to the sentiment which made our ancestors ever ready to espouse the cause of the peoples. For a few years the elation and enthusiasm excited by these events were shared by a majority of Englishmen. Pitt, as we have seen, was influenced by them long after the bulk of his party had taken sides with the eastern despotisms. It is true that the excesses of the Jacobins alienated a large section of the Whigs, and left only the more robust friends of

liberty in sympathy with the French Republic. But Fox and his followers, with all who felt like them amongst the general English public, were able to look beyond the troubles and crimes of the day, and to perceive the immeasurable advantages which the upheaval of France must ultimately confer upon the world. If passion and prejudice, as well as just reprobation, blinded men for a long time to the real achievements of the French revolution, and to the actual gains of the revolutionary epoch throughout Europe, there were some at any rate who could not be thus blinded ; and there came a time when the majority of Englishmen saw cause to acknowledge a balance of good.

The death of Napoleon at St Helena, and the similar course of England and France in regard to the Holy Alliance and the Congress of Laybach (though the French Government were not unwilling to receive a mandate from the Alliance at Verona), tended to diminish the gulf which a quarter of a century of wars had created between the two countries. Their subsequent joint action in Greece—where they made it their business to promote the success of an insurrection—helped to draw them yet more nearly together. The revolutions of 1830 and 1848, regarded by many Frenchmen as vindicating the work of 1789—just as in England 1688 had been taken to vindicate 1649—certainly did much to reconquer the positions won and lost during the first Republic.

Between 1789 and 1870 there have been frequent action and reaction in the revolutionary development of France, which have necessarily produced cognate movements in Europe at large. The pendulum has swung backwards and forwards, but the hands on the dial have steadily advanced ; and the timepiece marks the progress

of England at least as accurately as that of France. Our revolutions in the meanwhile have cost us less, and have been less dramatic, than those of our neighbour, but undoubtedly we have been well justified by their results for the sympathy which we had displayed towards the ideas of 1789. Our policy of peace, retrenchment, and reform—shaped out before Louis had so much as consented to summon the States General—was first impeded, then notably strengthened, by the portentous conflict in Europe; and in no respect has this policy been more distinctly advanced, nowhere has it been more successful, than in its application to foreign affairs.

Electoral reform in England has exerted a greater influence on our relations with other countries than might be imagined by unreflecting persons. The only sure mode of giving effect in every generation to the will of the people in matters of external policy is by making the people themselves the masters of their own destinies; and this is not possible until the representative system of government is brought to perfection. In 1793 the last word was with the aristocrats and the nabobs. After 1832 it was to a somewhat fuller jury that a Minister was able to appeal for sanction; but even in 1853 Lord Aberdeen could not share his responsibility (as he would perhaps have gladly done) with the nation as a whole. He went unwillingly to a worthless war—a war which almost every one now condemns, and which might have been forbidden then, as war of a like kind was forbidden in 1876 and 1878—if the chief sufferers by war could have been consulted. From 1868 onwards we have had a fairly wide franchise and a tolerably complete representation of the responsible classes; and from 1868 it has

seemed less and less probable that England will ever again undertake a wanton or an avoidable war.

It is argued that if we were to guide ourselves by the popular foreign policy which might happen to be uppermost from year to year we should fall into a hundred dangers and disasters—that the people would be bad Foreign Ministers and diplomatists—that popular opinion is often distorted by passion, or misled by ignorance and demagoguery—and that we could not possibly dispense in the management of our international concerns with the experience and subtlety of men trained to the craft. There is doubtless a certain danger of this kind, which may be estimated at what it is worth ; but when we see what ruling classes have done for us in the past we can hardly feel much alarm in regard to the national self-government of the future. Nor is it by any means certain that popular opinion, or passion, or ignorance would often lead the country astray on questions of war and peace, of commercial interchange and reciprocation. So far indeed as we have had the means of judging since the direction of affairs has come practically into the hands of the people, the interests of England have been perfectly safe with them, and the instincts of the masses have been sound and patriotic.

Leaving this question, however, for further consideration in another place, we may be content with the fact that the extension of the franchise and a better electoral system have transferred a large share of political power to the democracy, and that as a consequence the popular traditions of sympathy with oppressed races, peaceful commercial development, straightforward dealing with powerful or weaker nations, and abhorrence of war, have been raised to something like the influence formerly possessed by the Tory and Whig traditions. The long

stretch of peace which followed the Napoleonic wars may have been due in the first place to exhaustion and revulsion; but the great revolution of 1832 undoubtedly made us more loth, as a nation, to engage in European conflicts. The Afghan war was undertaken against the will or without the knowledge of Englishmen in general. The Crimean war was "drifted" into by the coalition Ministry of Lord Aberdeen, vastly to the discredit of the older officialism. The expeditionary wars which have since taken place have been for the most part avoidable, and may (let us hope) be regarded as the last outcome of a system fallen into decay.

In yet another sense the revolutionary epoch effected a large modification of England's attitude towards the outer world. The vast disturbances and complications which arose out of the French upheaval stimulated the popular craving for peace. There had of course always been a peace party in England, or at any rate there had been a numerous body of men who protested against the frequency of wars, and who were able in one way or another to make their voices heard in favour of peace. The demand for a peaceful policy had been formulated before Walpole's time; his Administration sanctioned it and made it a permanent factor in politics. It was pre-eminently a popular demand; but the most formal writers on international law—as Grotius in the seventeenth century, and Vattel in the eighteenth—treat it as a legitimate and serious problem for the consideration of publicists. Grotius recommended a Congress of nations for the purpose of settling international disputes without recourse to war; and towards the close of the eighteenth century the idea of arbitration had assumed a definite shape—not indeed so definite in Europe as in the minds of the genuine statesmen who presided over the birth of

the American Republic. Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, took the philosophical view of the question which was naturally generated in a country so far removed from the influence of the older monarchies, and which was so well calculated to form the *tabula rasa* of their new political system. Franklin declared with his characteristic boldness that there had never been a good war or a bad peace. Jefferson stigmatised war as "an instrument entirely inefficient towards redressing wrongs," which increased instead of indemnifying losses. These were the men who had come out of our heavily-taxed and ever pugnacious England, and they were anxious to return good for evil by exposing the mischief of chronic wars, "by which," as Samuel Adams said, "the world has too long been deluged, to the destruction of human happiness and the disgrace of human reason and government."

But the old country had yet her terrible lessons to learn. It might have been infinitely better for the world if English statesmen a hundred years ago had been willing to accept this lesson also from the exiles who had already taught them that a nation struggling for its liberties can never be finally crushed. If Pitt had been a Peace Minister in fact, as well as in desire, and the French scourge had never passed over us, the aspirations of the popular advocates of peace might have been fulfilled, even in the eighteenth century.

The pioneers of the revolutionary epoch in Europe were perhaps more sentimental and less practical than the Americans; they looked to the immediate creation of utopias rather than to gradual and logical development, and yearned for universal peace when they should have been devising plans for arbitration or disarmament. But at all events they set peace before the world as an

aim and object, and so familiarised the minds of men with its beauty and virtue that the speedy abolition of war became one of the primary interests of the great political revival. Saint-Pierre, Leibnitz, Fichte, Bentham, amongst a score of propagandists, led the way in the new cult of peace ; and to the fervid imagination of philosophers and philanthropists this cult was never nearer to its consummation than in the first intoxicating triumphs of 1789 and 1790.

The quarter of a century of war which was substituted by the irony of fate for the expected apotheosis of peace devastated and exhausted the whole of Europe, but it did not (as it could not) destroy the revolutionary ideas against which despotism had set its face like a flint. Paradoxical as it appears, the revolution had meant and made for peace, and the suppression of the revolutionary Governments contributed in no small degree to the ultimate repudiation of war. No sooner was the work of the last Grand Alliance completed than the peoples in almost every European country began to stir and murmur in their hives. Revolution rose from the ashes of revolution ; France herself, and Spain, and the Italian States, and the English democracy which had so patiently awaited its turn, took up the tale of 1789 as though it had never been interrupted, and carried on the process of development as though the chain had been unbroken throughout those five weary lustrums.

The speeches, the books and pamphlets, the general history of the second and third decades of the century reveal a notable growth of democratic sentiment and activity amongst Englishmen of nearly all classes. There had been democratic activity on the outbreak of the French revolution ; we had our Friends of the People, our Corresponding Society, our "seditious meetings"

(distinguished mainly by abnormal demands for a better representative system, and alarming threats of withholding taxes until these demands were accorded). But a petty white terror had suppressed the red radicalism of our puny revolution; and, indeed, the common-sense English people, which had no sympathy with Jacobinism, sharply repudiated French modes and models of progress when they saw to what a miserable kind of *cæsarism* they had brought the men of '89. The democracy suited to English minds was the democracy which had seen disaster in English victories over the American colonists, and glory in the final triumph of the States—the democracy of Fox, the virtual democracy of Pitt in his youth, of Lord Grey when he declared that resistance to laws thought bad was justifiable if it were likely to be successful. In the worst days of the Napoleonic tyranny sensible men put the light of their democratic tendencies under a bushel, and stood aside until the whirlwind had passed. Fox admitted that the cry for reform was ill-timed in 1796, and ten years later he took office without stipulating any of the points which he would have thought indispensable a dozen years before.

But when the war was over and Napoleon was in exile, the truce in England drew to an end. There was no longer the French bugbear to be thought of—more injurious to the cause of English democrats than menacing to the crown or the aristocracy. Jacobinism and imperialism had alike been effaced in blood, and there remained for us chiefly the great lessons which had borne their fruit in the first and genuinely popular uprising of France. From the signing of the Treaty of Paris the English people began to insist on taking the management of their affairs at home and abroad into their own hands. The peace which they had regained

they resolved to make permanent. The war which had wrecked and ruined them they determined to make their last. The gallant struggle which succeeded has been told with eloquence and unction by many historians, and it may be told hereafter with even more of philosophic breadth and courage. It is a story in which we see the democracy of England asserting its strength and claiming its inheritance ; and it is a story in which no feature is more conspicuously prominent than the effort to establish peace on a secure and stable basis.

There are aspects of our still somewhat inchoate popular foreign policy which deserve to be considered in detail ; but it may be interesting in the meantime to review in historic order some of the more important personal policies of the nineteenth century.

V.

CANNING'S FOREIGN POLICY.

[George Canning,	. . . . .	Born, Apr. 1770
M.P. for Newport,	. . . . .	1793
Foreign Secretary (<i>Portland Admin.</i>),	. . . . .	Mar. 1807
Duel with Castlereagh ; resigned,	. . . . .	Sept. 1809
Ambassador at Lisbon,	. . . . .	1814
President, Board of Control (<i>Liverpool Admin.</i>),	. . . . .	June 1816
Resigned,	. . . . .	Dec. 1820
Appointed Governor-General of India,	. . . . .	Mar. 1822
Foreign Secretary (<i>Liverpool Admin.</i>),	. . . . .	Sept. 1822
First Lord,	. . . . .	Apr. 1827
Died,	. . . . .	Aug. 1827]

FEW Englishmen of his time conferred greater benefits on their country than Canning. His policy was popular, liberal, generous, and straightforward ; he was at a most critical period the champion of liberty against a more insidious foe than Bonaparte had ever been ; and he had the extreme felicity of being able to establish free nations on both sides of the Atlantic, and to strike a blow at oppression such as made the despots reel. Short as his life was, he died not too soon for his fame. If he had lived another twenty years there might have been little more for him to do ; though it is quite possible that he would have ended his political career as a Whig, or at least have stood by Peel's side in the honourable attitude of "a great Parliamentary middleman." He would not indeed have taken part with Grey, and his old antagonist Brougham, in extending the franchise—a course to which he was always obstinately and even bitterly opposed. He could not have entered with the

Duke of Richmond into a coalition Cabinet. The continuance of his Administration, supported by his great popularity in the country, would doubtless have deferred Reform; and if he had eventually stood aside to let a Reform Act pass he would probably have returned to office either a converted Whig or the leader of an irresistible combination. Tory as he was in many respects, he had sufficiently attested his liberal sympathies by his youthful generosity, by his support of Catholic emancipation and the abolition of the slave trade, and above all by the resolution and energy with which he rescued his country from its damaging connection with the despots who, as he said, "with the gospel on their lips were ready to crush free institutions with the sword."

Canning was one of the boys whom Pitt had the art of gathering about him, and inspiring with his own indomitable activity. Fresh from Eton and Christ Church, half inclining to cast in his lot with Fox, Sheridan, Burke, and the brilliant school of Whigs whose brilliance was fated to be almost its sole reward, he was sent for by the great Minister, and tempted with the offer of a seat in Parliament and a contingency of office. Poor and [ambitious, he might have had difficulty in refusing such a chance if he had been conscientiously opposed to the politics of his patron. But he was not conscientiously opposed to these politics. He had not committed himself to the leaders to whom his uncle had introduced him, and his opinions on such questions as that of Parliamentary reform—with which even Pitt had coquetted—are a proof that he did little violence to himself by accepting the invitation of the Premier. He was barely twenty-five when he was made Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and though that position was not one of special responsibility so long as the Foreign

Secretary was in the House of Commons, or with Pitt himself in the Commons, yet the circumstances of the time made the post important. As Pitt's pupil and favourite lieutenant Canning of course became a war Minister like his leader; and he was always more or less a war Minister, to the end of his life. He shared the official belief of the day, that France, and in particular Napoleon Bonaparte, must be subdued at all costs; just as, later in life, he made up his mind that the Holy Alliance must be put down, whatever that also might cost.

Pitt saw that he had not made a mistake in his estimate; and as long as he lived Canning was honourably associated with him. But the young politician was not a man to conciliate friendships. His tongue and his pen were too bitter, his sallies of wit or humour were too vehement and straight to the mark, for close amity with any but his intimate connections. The *Anti-Jacobin* made him almost as many foes as it gained him admirers. When he rose to speak in the House men would get up and walk out—not because he was a bore to whom it would be tedious to listen, but because he was clever enough to be worth snubbing. His quarrel and duel with Castlereagh were the climax of a rivalry, or at any rate the outcome of an antipathy, which caused his withdrawal from Parliamentary life at a most critical period, and heightened a contrast of conduct and policy altogether favourable to the younger man.*

* Canning is perhaps not much read in our time; and it may be his own fault. He certainly has the virtue of pungency in denunciation and spirit in the eulogy of his friends. His invectives on the French revolutionists were bitter enough, and still more bitter his scorn of the English sympathisers with or palliators of the French. Here, for instance, is the hymn which was to welcome in St Paul's the high-priest of the Theo-philanthropists.

So far as our present purpose is concerned, Canning is to be regarded simply as one who carried on and modified the traditions of our foreign policy during an epoch on which the subsequent history of England, as of the world, has so largely turned. And in thus regarding him we must draw a certain distinction between his conduct as Foreign Minister in 1807-9 and his conduct as Foreign Minister and Premier after 1822. Not that Canning turned his coat in the interval, or, in the words of a Tory historian, "sacrificed principle to ambition, and climbed to power by adopting the principles

Couriers and Stars, sedition's evening host,
Thou Morning Chronicle and Morning Post !
Whether ye make the rights of man your theme,
Your country libel, and your God blaspheme,
Or dirt on private worth and virtue throw,
Still blasphemous or blackguard, praise Lepaux.

And ye five other wandering bards that move
In sweet accord of harmony and love,
C dge and S . . th . y, L . . . d, and L . . b, and Co.,
Tune all your mystic harps to praise Lepaux !

Pr . . . tl . y and W . . f . . ld, humble, holy men,
Give praises to his name with tongue and pen !

Th . lw . l, and ye that lecture as ye go,
And for your pains get pelted, praise Lepaux !

Praise him each jacobin, or fool, or knave,
And your cropped heads in sign of worship wave !

All creeping creatures, venomous and low,
Paine, W . ll . . ms, G . dw . n, H . lcr . ft—praise Lepaux !

And so on. In a more generous vein is a song written in 1802 in honour of Pitt, for the inaugural ceremony of the Pitt Club.

If hush'd the loud whirlwind that ruffled the deep,
The sky if no longer dark tempests deform ;
When our perils are past shall our gratitude sleep ?
No !—Here's to the pilot that weather'd the storm !

... And shall not his memory to Britain be dear,
Whose example with envy all nations behold ;
A statesman unbiass'd by interest or fear,
By power uncorrupted, untainted by gold ?

Who when Terror and Doubt through the universe reign'd,
While Rapine and Treason their standards unfurl'd,
The heart and the hopes of his country maintain'd,
And one kingdom preserved 'midst the wreck of the world.

which he had spent the best part of his life in combating." There is not much evidence even of a change of opinion which would justify such a charge as this; and change of opinion is not sacrifice of principle. He changed by natural development of mind, and was able to point at every step to the reasonable and logical motives which constrained him. It may be that as a young man fresh from Oxford—where the first Marquis of Lansdowne had already pointed him out as future Premier of England—he hesitated for some days or weeks before casting in his lot with either party. So

... So, Pitt ! when the course of thy greatness is o'er,
Thy talents, thy virtues, we fondly recall !
Now justly we prize thee, when lost we deplore,
Admired in thy zenith, but loved in thy fall !

... And O ! if again the rude whirlwind should rise,
The dawning of peace should fresh darkness deform,
The regrets of the good, and the fears of the wise,
Shall turn to the pilot that weather'd the storm !

His "Ode to the Doctor" is a fair sample of the kind of wit which made Canning feared in the House. It is a good hit at the rival of his own leader and patron, struck after Addington had ventured on a particularly bold piece of nepotism.

When the faltering periods lag,
Or the House receives them drily,
Cheer, oh cheer him, Brother Bragge,
Cheer, oh cheer him, Brother Hiley.

Each a gentleman at large,
Lodged and fed at public charge,
Paying, with a grace to charm ye,
This the fleet and that the army.

Brother Bragge and Brother Hiley,
Cheer him when he speaks so vilely ;
Cheer him when his audience flag,
Brother Hiley, Brother Bragge.

Equally familiar to the reader will be Canning's comparison of his friend with the statesman who succeeded him in office—"Pitt is to Addington what London is to Paddington." Canning, however, could take as well as give—and perhaps he had to take more than he gave. "Give me," he said, in his "New Morality"—

Give me the avowed, the erect, the manly foe,
Bold I can meet—perhaps may turn his blow ;
But of all plagues, good Heaven, thy wrath can send,
Save, save, oh ! save me from the candid friend !

much at least may be allowed as part of the defect of youth. The page was clean and blank; the pencil was put into his hand, and when he sketched the plan of his ambition he had nothing to erase. At the outbreak of the French Revolution he was a student at Christ Church—a generous boy of nineteen, full of the storm and impetus of enthusiasm, and ready to believe all good things of his fellow men. He believed well of the Revolution, as Pitt, his elder by eleven years, and most of the able men on both sides believed. If soon afterwards he displayed bitter enmity against the Republic in its military phase, he did so in common with the majority of the Whigs, as well as with Pitt and the Tories. Nothing so much attests the constancy of the more generous views which are mainly associated with his memory by the present age than the lack of sympathy always apparent between him and Castlereagh. It is Castlereagh, not Canning, who typifies for us the anti-popular aspects of the diplomacy of that age. One of the most memorable acts of Canning's first term in the Foreign Office was his unsuccessful attempt in 1809 to secure the removal of Castlereagh from the Government. His utter inability to fall in with Castlereagh's views and methods led to his practical exclusion from office during most of the long term between his resignation in the year just named and his second appointment as Foreign Secretary.

The change which came over the spirit of English policy in 1822 was soon made manifest, and the sovereigns and statesmen of eastern Europe found to their cost that they had a very different kind of man to deal with now that Canning had taken the place of Lord Londonderry. It was the time when the Czar and his associates believed that they might advantageously put the Holy Alliance into active operation—when, in fact,

they did give effect to that sacred compact by suppressing the revolutions in Italy and Spain. Londonderry himself had been obliged to confess that England could take no part in an intervention between the monarch of any country and his subjects—unless indeed it were in behalf of the subjects ; but he had done this with much tenderness for the feelings of his Russian, Prussian, and Austrian friends, and had been at pains to soften down (if not apologise for) the peculiar constitution of his country. Canning lost no time in showing the crowned heads and ministers of those countries (and all else whom it might concern) that their divine right, Holy Alliance and unholy act principles found no response in the minds of Englishmen save one of abhorrence and repudiation. The foreign statesmen with whom Canning had to deal—the Metternichs and Nesselrodes of the imperial courts—were sufficiently well read to know the genius of the English constitution, and their chief art in intriguing with our representatives in the past had been to cozen and flatter us into overstepping the lines of that constitution. With Castlereagh they had in some measure succeeded ; and it must have been very galling to them to be confronted by an English Tory statesman who addressed them almost in the strain of a Fox.

Canning indeed was not by any means a mere Tory. He was a Free Trader, he was for Catholic emancipation, he was for the entire abolition of slavery. And above all he was a believer in the great advantages, commercial and other, which would be reaped by England as a commercial country from the establishment of free nations all over the world. He had not been member for Liverpool without learning much commercial wisdom from Mr Gladstone and his other friends and supporters

in that thriving port. He had not been President of the Board of Trade without cogitating and assimilating the doctrines of political economy. His receptive and candid mind had readily admitted the force of the arguments employed by those who assured him that the future prosperity of England demanded a continual enlargement of the field of her traffic beyond the seas. And he would not have been a statesman if he had not constructed upon this basis a system of practical policy.

The generous characteristics of Canning's foreign policy have already been affirmed. Apart from these, have we not here, in what may be called the Liverpool School of commercial development, a main source and motive power of the system associated with his name? And was it not, in effect, the revival of the Whig system of Walpole, qualified and enlarged by the imperial leanings of a quasi-Tory Minister?

Canning's secretary and part biographer, Stapleton, professes to give us a succinct account of his patron's system of foreign policy; and both from the writer's knowledge of his subject and from our independent means of testing his accuracy we may conclude that what he tells us of this system is at least true in itself, if it does not cover the whole ground of debate.

"The Holy Alliance (writes Mr Stapleton) was to be annihilated, and instead of the interests of that union of European sovereigns being made the main consideration in British policy, the interests of Great Britain herself were what, as a British statesman, Mr Canning determined more particularly to consult. It was not, however, that he thought that the aggrandizement of Great Britain ought to be sought at the expense of other Powers. On the contrary, he said that her prosperity

must contribute to the prosperity of surrounding nations, and her stability to the safety of the world. But it was in contradistinction to the doctrines of universal philanthropy, and equally so to their opposite extreme, the doctrines of legitimacy and divine right, which had given birth to the Holy Alliance scheme of amalgamating the different interests of separate States, and of binding their monarchs, as monarchs, to each other, instead of uniting them as protectors to their own dominions, that he asserted that the interests of his own native land are those to which above all others a statesman should attend. Still it was not by any violent transition from a practice of support to a system of active opposition to that Alliance that he could have safely brought any satisfactory results. A sudden change from one side to the other would infallibly, by raising the hopes of the democratical party, have excited them to outrage, and thus produced the very evil which it was intended to prevent. But no: the dissolution of the Alliance was to be effected gradually, by the withdrawal from it of the countenance of England; and the balance was to be held not only between contending nations, but between conflicting principles, giving the preponderance to neither, but aiding rather the liberal side, because the anti-liberals were then strongest." And elsewhere:—"The true policy of England," Canning said, "was to move steadily on in her own orbit, without looking too nicely to the conduct of the Powers in alliance with her; to be content with her own glory, and by its example to excite other nations to arrive at the same advantages which her peculiar system had bestowed upon her; but not by a wild crusade to endeavour to force those advantages upon other countries, converting blessings into curses as respected them, and courting danger and

difficulty as regarded herself.' Thus it was that Mr Canning endeavoured 'to stay the plague both ways ;' and thus he 'held the balance between conflicting principles and contending nations.'"

Such was the attitude which Canning had resolved to maintain towards other Powers so far as the mutual relations of England and her allies were concerned ; but he had also a very definite system of policy in regard to the active promotion of British interests abroad—a consideration which no English Minister can deem of secondary importance. Not only must our prosperity contribute to the prosperity of surrounding nations, but the prosperity of surrounding nations must contribute to our own, and their stability to the stability of England. More or less clearly expressed in Canning's utterances—more or less vividly present in his mind—this theory was an essential part of his policy, and has become one of the principal components of our national tradition.

It has been urged that the course adopted by Canning in favouring the Spanish insurgents, in supporting Portugal against the Spanish court, and in aiding the formation of the South American republics, was inspired in great measure by what we have termed the Liverpool School, and that one of its special motives was to save the capital and interest of the gigantic loans made by England to the revolutionary Cortes. It may well have been so. The motive is intelligible ; but it would not in itself suffice to account for the liberal policy of the reconstructed Ministry of 1822. The student of history must take a wider view, and must give his fellow men credit for greater diversity of disposition, if he would avoid the blind man's ditch.

A more lofty and doubtless a truer estimate was formed of Canning's conduct by the House of Commons

and the country from the moment when it was known how firm a tone had been assumed by the new Foreign Secretary in regard to the Congress of Verona (1822). As Hobhouse declared in the debate on the Address, if the same language had been used at Troppau and Laybach which had been used at Verona we might not have been faced by the difficulties which we then had to meet. In other words, if Castlereagh had more loyally and energetically interpreted at Troppau the abiding convictions of the English people in respect of the independence of foreign States, and the injustice of interference in their concerns, it is quite conceivable that the Congress of Verona might never have been heard of. And in that case it is more than conceivable that a strong and Liberal Spain might have taken her place in the new economy of European nations.

Some writers who have preferred the statesmanship of Castlereagh to the statesmanship of Canning have pointed out that the former did at any rate put on record at Laybach the inability of England as a revolutionary country to suppress the revolutions in Italy and Spain; and they refer to the State paper mentioned by Canning in this debate as containing the principles of his future action, inferring that it must have been wholly or partly the composition of Castlereagh. The fact is that this paper was drawn up in May 1820, before Canning had ceased to attend the meetings of the Cabinet in consequence of the death of his son. Internal evidence, and something approaching to an assertion of authorship on Canning's part,* indicate that

* It was not, he said on a subsequent occasion, referring to his admission of the existence of this paper, "with the intention of separating himself from those who preceded him in office, nor with the desire of claiming to himself any merit which belonged to them,

he was at least responsible for the sentiments of this most important document, which has all the significance of a new charter of English policy. Moreover, Castlereagh's manifest reluctance in declining the invitation to joint action with the Holy Alliance must be held to preclude him from the credit (which he himself would scarcely have claimed) of having originated this blazon of revolutionary principles.

The comparison between Canning and Castlereagh as Foreign Ministers must be instituted on two grounds—the ground of action and the ground of principle. Now the principles of Canning's policy, as we have seen, were laid down in some sense as early as 1807-9, when he, not Castlereagh, was Minister. Unfortunately for himself, and for England also, he fell a victim to factious opposition before he had had time to act upon the lines which he had drawn. The mistakes of England's action were made at and between the Congresses of Vienna and Laybach, when Castlereagh, not Canning, was Minister. In 1815 Canning was not a member of the Cabinet, being then in honourable exile at the Lisbon legation.

that he felt himself called upon to repeat what he had stated on a former day, and what had been much misunderstood,—narrowed by some and extended by others—that, applicable to the considerations on which the Congress was to be employed, he had found in the records of his office (and it was also in the records of the country) a State paper, laying down the principle of non-interference, with all the qualifications properly belonging to it. When, therefore, with whatever degree of courtesy, it had been ascribed to him that he had applied new principles to a new case, he had thought it but just to remind the House of a fact of which indeed it was already in possession. The principle of non-interference with the independence of foreign States was laid down in the document to which he alluded as broadly, clearly, and definitively as it was possible for any statesman to wish to lay it down."

He did not like the Treaty of Vienna. He did not admit the wisdom of binding this country in alliance with the Eastern Powers to maintain the existing distribution of territories in Europe—unjust as part of that distribution undoubtedly was. In 1821 Canning was again practically severed from Lord Liverpool's Government.

In a word, Canning had laid down principles which he was unable to translate into action: Castlereagh professed principles which were virtually contradicted by his action. The principles were the same; it was the personality of the Ministers which carried them to different issues.

Canning, it has been said, ought not to have gone to Verona. In our own time, it is just possible, a Minister might accept the seals of office in the morning and write a despatch in the afternoon stating that the intentions of his predecessor could not be carried out. That is a blunt style of diplomacy which might give more or less satisfaction to a democratic public opinion; but in 1822 it was impossible. The Minister of that day had not only a State paper for his guidance; he had the etiquette of the age, which bound him to take up the threads of the Foreign Office as his predecessor had left them, and to follow them at any rate until he could plausibly let them drop. This was what Canning intended to do. Yet he might not have taken part in the actual deliberations of Verona if the Duke of Wellington's indisposition had not made him too late to deliver himself of his charge at the preliminary meeting at Vienna.

Canning's best excuse for having anything to do with this Congress was that a blank refusal would have greatly

disconcerted the Powers, interrupted the amicable relations between them and England, and probably destroyed his influence on the Continent. But having determined to send the Duke as our representative he instructed him that, if the Allies should resolve in any way to intervene by force in the affairs of Spain, then "come what might, he should refuse the King's consent to become a party to it," even though the dissolution of the Alliance should be the consequence. This was the bold, and on that account decidedly the judicious course; and as the conditions of the Duke's attendance were plainly made known to the assembled monarchs the effect of Canning's attitude upon them was precisely what he had intended. It showed them that England could no longer be left out of account in the arrangement of their plans—that her Minister could not be relied upon for the complaisant neutrality, often coupled with moral encouragement, which had been received from Castlereagh, but that he must be considered as at all events a possible opponent in European complications. The general relief in England was as great as the consternation of Russia and Austria. For thirty years this country had occupied a false position. A revolutionary State, owing almost everything to the pressure which its people had been able to bring to bear upon its monarchs, it had been arrayed on the side of despots against a revolutionary people. The majority of Englishmen had sanctioned the policy of Pitt, at any rate after the declaration of war by the French Convention; but the relief was very great when it was understood that Canning had finally put an end to the subserviency of English diplomacy at the courts of the Eastern Powers.

It had been bitter enough that England (even if she had no alternative) should have been the chief instru-

ment in crushing the French Republic, and making the German and Russian tyrannies supreme on the Continent; still more bitter that without really defeating the ideas of 1789 in any country where they had taken root we had virtually defeated in our own country the ideas of 1688. It had been bitter to know that the outcome of the war had been a material gain to the despots, injustice to most of the smaller States,* and a ruinous burden of debt for ourselves; still more bitter that the English people, after making pecuniary sacrifices which in the spring and summer of 1815 rose to the frightful sum of £1,400,000 a day, should have found themselves after the Peace shorn of liberty as well as prosperity by Ministers who aped the maxims and methods of absolute power. It is infinitely to Canning's credit that he read

* "The Treaty of Paris had replaced the elder Bourbons on the throne of France, and the Congress of Vienna had divided the territories of Europe among the Sovereigns whose arms had defeated Napoleon. It was to be desired at that time that the wishes of the people of Europe should be consulted both in the choice of the Sovereign whom they were in future to obey and the form of the institutions by which they were thenceforth to be ruled. Both these conditions were set at naught by the armed monarchs at Vienna. The Belgians wished to be Belgian; they were made Dutch. The Lombards wished to be Italian; they were made Germans. The old Republics of Holland, Genoa, and Venice were not restored; the Prussians, who had indulged the hope of having a Constitution granted to them, were not gratified; the charter granted to the French people by Louis XVIII. contained ambiguous phrases by which Charles X. was enabled, fifteen years afterwards, to assume the power of dispensing with its most important provisions." (Earl Russell, in the Introduction to his "Speeches and Despatches.") The gains of Russia, Austria, and Germany are not fully enumerated in this passage; they included the divided spoils of Poland—for the partition treaties of 1772 and 1793 were sanctioned by the Congress of Vienna, the partial exceptions in favour of Cracow, &c., being a mockery clearly destined for reversal at the earliest opportunity.

the real mind of the country in 1822, and that in a sufficiently calm and unostentatious way he put his veto for ever on what may be styled the subservient tradition of England's policy.

He had not been many weeks at the Foreign Office when the representatives of Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France paid him a collective visit to point out the inconvenience (to them) arising out of the despatch of an English Minister to the revolutionary Government at Madrid. Canning limited himself to replying that, "as Sir William à Court must by that time have entered upon his functions at Madrid, it was useless in any way to discuss the propriety of sending him to that capital." The Duke of Wellington, at Verona, faithfully echoed the tone and reflected the colour of his chief's new policy. The Czar made some sort of complaint against the attitude of Lord Stratford at Constantinople, when the Duke firmly defended his compatriot; and though Alexander hereupon rejoined with a compliment to our Ambassador in Turkey, the English representative was not satisfied until he had in set terms repeated his vindication in a letter to Nesselrode.

The results of the Congress of Verona so far as Spain was concerned were certainly a partial triumph for Canning's policy. Though it was impossible for him, as it turned out, to save the revolutionary Government, and to prevent the return of the dynasty by which the country had been brought to ruin, he did give the *de facto* Government a chance for its life. The Czar had contemplated a joint attack on the Spaniards, and had intended at all events that a Russian force should enter the Peninsula. His design, however, was overruled, the Congress was technically abortive, and it was left for France alone, at her own instance, though with the con-

nivance of the Eastern Powers, to play the part of executioner. The Duc d'Angoulême proved to be competent for his task, and thus the fate of Spain was sealed. The Bourbons were rehabilitated; but the revolted colonies for the most part established their independence.

The conduct of Canning in regard to the South American Republics, as well as in regard to the Franco-Spanish quarrel, was exceedingly creditable to him and to England; and it remains to this day one of the brightest incidents in the national tradition of this country. The assistance rendered by us, as a revolutionary State, to revolutionary peoples asserting their claim to self-government was accorded in this instance by a nominal Tory. The same thing is true of the assistance given to the Greeks a few years later. No doubt the Whigs under a capable leader would have done the like if they had been in power, and would thus have justified the best of their earlier traditions. But they were not in power. The Tories were in power; and a weak Tory premier, guided by a strong independent colleague, allowed England to show herself in her true colours as the protagonist of revolution.

Therefore it is impossible to consider this mark and type of England's foreign policy in the nineteenth century as a mark and type of the tradition of either party. The impossibility is confirmed in both cases by the subsequent bearing of Whigs and Tories alike towards various popular causes in various parts of the world—notably by their bearing towards the subject races of Turkey, towards the Greeks, and the Afghans, and the slaves of the Southern States of America, and to numerous minor races in Europe, Asia, and Africa. No doubt there are honourable exceptions. Individual peoples have profited

by English partisan policy ; individual English statesmen have directed the policy of their party in a truly generous sense. But in most of the instances where we have given effectual help to struggling nationalities it has been the voice of popular, national, instinctive sympathy for the oppressed which has dominated the councils of the State, and virtually dictated a policy to the Government. It has been the people, not a party, which has prevailed. It has been the third or popular tradition which has made us true to our better selves, whether Whig or Tory has been at the helm.

Canning strove honestly and in the most disinterested manner to arrange the difficulty which had arisen between France and Spain. He offered his mediation to the French Government; and his despatches to our representatives abroad, both on this and on other occasions, are models of the diplomacy which (when mediation is possible and politic) befits the national policy of a powerful Liberal State.*

Nevertheless the opponents of the Government found room for argument, and even for censure, in the conduct of the Foreign Office, and in the negotiations which had proceeded between England and France. Both Whigs and High Tories called Canning to account. Lord Ellenborough and Lord Grey were particularly inclined to condemn the tameness of the course pursued by our

* Appendix, A.—To the generality of readers the despatches of Canning are not so familiar as they were to our fathers and grand-fathers. Yet in an age when the popular tradition gathers strength from year to year it might be well worth while to reprint some of them, with a selection from his speeches, in the hope that they would be read at any rate by politicians and students. A few of these illustrating the text are given in an Appendix to this volume.

Foreign Minister. How, they contended, could Canning, who in 1808 was personally responsible for the Peninsular war, and for the despatch of the Duke of Wellington to Spain in order to drive out the French, now abandon the same country to the same enemy? France, said Lord Grey, was dictating to an independent nation a change in its constitution; the principle was "most odious and most unjust;" and if England should think fit to take up arms in defence of Spain she had an undeniable right to do so. No doubt we must think of the interests of our own country, as well as of our right or title to go to war. But our interests were really at stake; the danger was at our doors. "We ought not to stand by and see the Peninsula overrun:" the balance of power would be destroyed by the presence of France in Spain. "When once France had the custody of Spain she would be backed by the Holy Alliance in her efforts to destroy the liberties of mankind. The monarchical principle once established, and liberty driven from the Continent, it was not to be supposed either that she would remain unassailed in this her last asylum, or that the despots of Europe would tolerate the bitter reproaches of the free press of England or the unshackled discussions of her independent Parliament."

This was a somewhat extraordinary medley of ideas to come from the mouth of a Whig. Sympathy with the *de facto* Government in Spain, dread of a restoration of the old tyrannic and incompetent dynasty, indignation against the truculent intervention of France—these were perfectly natural feelings in the mind of Lord Grey; but the conclusions which he drew from the facts of the case do not seem to have been justified. Of course it could not be urged by a statesman in the present day that England has an "undeniable right" to take part in

a quarrel between two Continental Powers merely because she holds the conduct of one of them to be odious and unjust. Nor should we expect a Whig statesman to maintain that British interests were at stake because one country was attacking another ; nor yet that the balance of power in Europe was likely to be fatally disturbed by the presence of a French army in Spain, or a German army in Austria, or a Russian army in Turkey. The force of treaties and of public law, apart from special facts and military chances, would be held to be quite sufficient as a guarantee for Europe. There were treaties existing when Lord Grey spoke—such as the Anglo-Spanish treaty of 1812, by which Spain undertook not to enter into another combination with France in the nature of the Family Compact ; a treaty to which France had formally adhered in 1815—which might have set his mind at rest. As for the fear of the Holy Alliance assailing liberty in her last asylum, in this country, it was too manifestly exaggerated to quicken the pulses of ordinary Englishmen.

This was the line which Canning took in replying to his critics. He did not believe that the presence of the French in Spain would be an actual menace to England, or even remotely dangerous for English liberties. He did go so far as to admit that the bellicose action of France tended to disturb the balance of power, and that ultimate complications with Portugal might hereafter compel us to intervene ; but the disturbance and the complications had not yet arisen, and that which had already taken place was not deemed sufficient to justify us in declaring war. Moreover, “the strength of Great Britain had very lately been strained to the utmost ; her means were at that precise stage of recovery which made it most desirable that the progress of that recovery should

not be interrupted ; and her resources, then in a course of rapid reproduction, would by any sudden check be thrown into disorder more deep and difficult of cure." Thus it was in the interests of a policy of peace and retrenchment that the Tory statesman opposed a Whig statesman in his recommendation of war !

It is difficult to say what had become of the older party traditions when this conflict of principles and ideas was possible. No doubt we perceive in the attitude of Lord Grey a vigorous assertion of the central dogma of the Whigs—the right of popular constitutional changes ; and if he could at that date have thrown off the incubus of the "balance of power," and confined his argument to the advisability of protecting the Spanish constitution, nothing more need have been said than that he had not made out a sufficiently strong case for armed intervention. The fact is that this argument alone was no longer the exclusive privilege of Whig statesmen. It had become, as we have seen, or at least it was in process of becoming, the mark of a national rather than of a party tradition. The Whigs had to a great extent forfeited their title to it by coalescing with Pitt in 1793 and 1806—if not wilfully and wrongfully, yet certainly to their damage and discredit.

It was a home-thrust which Canning delivered to his arraigners in the House when he declared that though England, in the event of a war with France, might not think herself justified in employing against her enemy "the arms of internal revolution," yet Spain would be both justified in using and willing to use such weapons "in a struggle begun avowedly from an enmity to her internal institutions." Was it then for England, who had waged such a long war against Jacobins and anarchists in France, to be instrumental in placing in the

hands of Spain the means of inflicting so dreadful a retaliation?—"to be a party to a war in which, if Spain should be victorious, the consequences to France, and through France to Europe, might be such as would make the effects of victory more baneful than defeat?"

The Opposition of 1823 could make no rejoinder to an argument of this kind.

The Franco-Spanish question was complicated for England by a Portuguese question, arising out of a treaty between this country and Portugal whereby we had guaranteed her against attack. In Portugal as in Spain there had been a revolution; a constitutional Government had been established, and though the royal family had returned to their capital the popular movement was still triumphant. When appealed to for a guarantee of the existing order of things Canning replied that to give this would be to interfere in the internal affairs of the State, and thus to violate the principle of non-interference which England actually professed, and which Portugal herself should desire to maintain. "If England examined the new institutions of Portugal for the sake of deriving from them new motives for fulfilling old engagements, with what propriety could she prohibit other Powers from examining them for the purpose of drawing any other conclusion?" It was enough to say that the recent modifications of the Portuguese Government had in no way affected England's engagements to Portugal, and that she felt herself still as much bound to defend that country under its altered constitution as under the monarchy with which the alliance had been formed.

This, it is manifest, was a test case for the policy of

non-intervention, such as Canning had conceived and professed it; and the manner in which he met the appeal of Portugal in 1822 was more satisfactory—certainly more in accord with the principles of national foreign policy which have struck their roots in the heart of modern England—than his reception of a similar appeal in 1826, when he sent troops to Lisbon. Yet even for this course there were reasons which must have gone far to satisfy the minds of the most tenacious champions of non-intervention.

In 1825 England had arranged a treaty between Portugal and Brazil whereby the independence of the latter country was recognised; and the Spanish Government, which from the suppression of the revolution in 1823 had been at war with the American colonies, greatly resented the English mediation, and felt a not unnatural alarm at the consequences to themselves of so notable an instance of successful revolution. The situation was complicated at the same time by the death of the Portuguese king and the uncertainty of the succession. The heir to the crown, Don Pedro, had been selected as Emperor of Brazil, and he took the opportunity as soon as he heard of the king's death of assuming the royal title in order to grant a constitution to Portugal, after which he appointed his daughter as his successor. Canning saw fit to accept this arrangement, though he was not without misgiving as to the result of summoning the Cortes at Lisbon, which was provided for in Don Pedro's charter.

It was now that the Spaniards, urged both by their own jealousies and by the private instigations of Metternich, who was playing a card of his own in the shape of Dom Miguel, the brother of Don Pedro, then resident at Vienna—determined to pick a quarrel with Portugal;

and in the course of 1826 (a French garrison being all the time established at Cadiz) they violated Portuguese territory. Canning here saw his *casus fœderis*: England was bound by treaty to protect Portugal against foreign attack, and a foreign attack had been constituted by the action of the Spanish Government. He received the news from Portugal on the 8th of December, drew up on the 9th and delivered to Parliament on the 11th a royal message announcing the despatch of troops to Lisbon,* and actually despatched the troops on the following day.

For all that could be seen to the contrary this might have been the first step (so far as our action was concerned) of a long, disastrous, and general European war. Spain undoubtedly had reason to hate us, and its monarchical government had special inducements to combat the revolutionary spirit in Portugal, even though it might be assisted by English arms. France—the presence of whose army in the Peninsula was in great measure responsible for the outbreak of hostilities—had hardened her heart against our frequent warnings. The Austrian Government hated Liberal institutions in any shape, and Metternich would have been particularly glad to defeat and humiliate England. It might easily have happened that these three countries would be found ranged together against us, and in that case we should scarcely have escaped the calamities of one or two adverse campaigns. If all this was not probable it was at least possible, and the English Government and people were not without a deep sense of the gravity of the step which had been taken.

For Canning, indeed, and for the Cabinet, there had been little option in the matter. Our treaties bound us to Portugal, and the main question at the time was

* Appendix, B.

whether we had, by our action in the few preceding years, needlessly aggravated the situation of affairs. The High Tories were disposed to think that Canning had done so by his tenderness to the popular constitutions of other countries, and especially by his recognition of the South American States. They blamed his policy in this respect; and even in the Cabinet there were individual members who believed that war might have been avoided. The only means, however, by which they could have prevented the occurrence of the cause of war would have been by the continuance of Castlereagh's policy of subservience to the despots—amongst them the despots of France and Spain; and the cause of war having arisen, the only mode in which they could have escaped the necessity of fighting would have been by repudiating the treaties with Portugal. It is possible that they might have withdrawn on principle from the engagements entered into with the Portuguese crown so soon as the revolution of 1820 had overturned the throne. This would have been the sole method even approximating to a just and creditable policy; but that course had not been adopted, and there can be no doubt that the English people had warmly approved of Canning's action from the first.

The question suggests itself whether Canning and the country, having in 1822 so freely declared themselves in favour of peace and retrenchment, would not have done better for the national interests by divesting themselves of their responsibilities under the Portuguese treaties, and ridding themselves of the embarrassments connected with the guarantee. From our present point of view this question would probably be answered in the affirmative with very little hesitation. It may be doubted whether there is at this moment any corner of

the European Continent, or any region in the whole world, not being English territory, in respect of which a true majority of the English people would willingly consent to give an absolute guarantee—binding themselves to go to war in order to preserve it from attack. However this may be with ourselves in our own days, the case was clearly different in 1826. Then Canning was certainly prepared to fight for Portugal—as he had announced himself to be from the year 1822. And the reasons of this disposition are plain enough. Canning, as a Minister, clung to the treaties. As a Minister sincerely anxious to promote the interests of England beyond the seas he had determined to aid the formation of the American free States, and to pursue in Europe a course in harmony with this design. As a Minister who had been called to power by the popular voice, and to whom popular favour was the breath of his nostrils, he was bent on carrying out a policy which he knew to be popular. As for the disposition of the people at large, there were two motives which more than any other induced England to oppose the dynastic Governments in the Peninsula, and to defend the Portuguese in 1826. One was the motive of sympathy with the Spanish and Portuguese revolutions, which enlisted the national mind in the cause of the struggling races. The other was the desire to secure new outlets for British commerce in America by establishing free and rapidly-developing States in place of the fettered and unsettled colonies of weak or hostile European Powers.

These are the principles on which England and the English Minister for Foreign Affairs proceeded in the third decade of the century, not only with respect to Portugal but also with respect to the recognition of the independence of the Spanish colonies—Colombia,

Ecuador, Venezuela, the Argentine States, Chili, and Peru.* In the debate which took place after the communication of the royal message on December 12th, 1826, Canning vindicated his policy in a splendid effort of oratory, perhaps the best example of his style which has been handed down to us.† This speech was welcomed by the House and the country as an absolute justification of the policy of the Government. In Parliament, beyond a few timid criticisms and the implacable wrath of Joseph Hume and his fellow-economists, there was no opposition to Canning's policy; and if events had not permitted us to withdraw our troops before any serious need for their services had arisen, there can be no question that the country would have heartily supported the Government in the course on which it had entered. The knowledge of this fact doubtless influenced France in its adoption of conciliatory measures: and the sight of the British troops sufficed to clear Portugal of its invaders.

Another question of special importance and interest with which Canning was called upon to deal, and which occupied him more or less closely throughout the last six years of his life, was the Greek question. This also, like the questions raised in south-western Europe, was the outcome of a revolution—of a revolution coincident with and not to be entirely dissociated from the revolutions in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. The risings of 1820-1 may be looked upon as an aftermath of the harvest of 1789, produced from the same seed though under varied conditions. In each case a weak and oppressive Government impelled the populace to revolt;

* Appendix, C.

† Appendix, D.

in each case there had been an initial triumph of the people sufficient to warrant Europe—more than sufficient to warrant England—in treating with the revolutionary leaders as at least able to represent and answer for the nation. But in Greece there was this peculiarity, that the Government which had been overturned was alien in race to the revolted people ; it was not on the same terms of amity with the great European Powers, and the signatories of the recent international treaties were not pledged to it in the same manner as to the sovereigns of Italy and Spain. Such treaties as there were at that time between Turkey and the Powers were almost entirely outside the bounds of the European economy. They were for the most part exacted after wars which the Porte had brought on itself by the misgovernment of its subject races, and their object was (at all events nominally) the relief of these subject races from oppression. The same original causes led up to the Greek revolt, and as Russia in particular had secured a right of intervention on behalf of the Porte's Greek subjects it was not to be expected that the members of the Holy Alliance would be so much shocked by this insurrection as they were by the outbreaks in the western peninsulas.

Nevertheless the sincere hatred of rebellion in any form which was entertained by Alexander and his allies prevented them from acknowledging the independence of the Greeks, or from taking any steps which might have promoted their cause. The delegates sent to Verona were refused a hearing, and, though Russia made some show of an intention to go to war with Turkey, Greece did not at that time derive the slightest assistance from the Powers. She was compelled at tremendous odds to keep the question alive for another

five years, until, mainly by the contrivance of Canning, Europe had made up its mind to interfere.

No fair conclusion as to the disposition of Canning towards the Greek cause can be drawn from the attitude of England in 1822. Castlereagh died, as we have seen, when the Congress of Verona was about to assemble; and the first care of his successor was to confine within the narrowest possible limits the action of the representative whom it had been resolved to send to the meeting. Thus when Nesselrode introduced the subject of the Greek revolt, and of Russia's relations with the Porte, Canning contented himself with an almost colourless declaration, whereby he left the matter open for future treatment. The Czar, Nesselrode had stated, was ready to renew his diplomatic relations with the Porte if the latter would either discuss the guarantees suitable to be given to the Greeks as an inducement to them to conclude an armistice, or prove "by a series of facts" that it was disposed "to respect the Christian religion, placed under the protection of Russia," and establish peace in the Greek peninsula. The Austrian, Prussian, and French representatives accepted this position as reasonable; but Wellington hesitated. It was necessary for him to consult his Government before taking formal note of Nesselrode's declaration; and at the end of a fortnight he received his instructions from Canning. He then, after acknowledging the "magnanimous moderation" of the Czar, affirmed that in the opinion of his Government the Porte had already displayed, by its partial concessions, a "series of facts" which would warrant Russia in re-opening diplomatic relations. At the same time he undertook that the influence of England should be brought to bear on the Porte in order to confirm it in

its good dispositions. On the following day a document was communicated to the Congress, in which the Czar declared that "the friendship of his allies inspired him with such a sense of security that he entirely confided to their wisdom the direction of all future negotiations." *

The situation was undoubtedly a difficult one for Russia, and consequently for all the Powers. The Czar was honestly opposed to the revolutionary principle, even when its application was injurious to the hereditary enemy of his country. He was probably relieved to find that he could creditably escape from the active championship of insurgents against their sovereign; and it need not be supposed that Canning had no sympathy with the Greeks because at this moment he virtually dissuaded Russia from going to war with Turkey.

The fact is that Canning had already conceived his design of outwitting and overthrowing the Holy Alliance; and it is a question whether he did more to effect his purpose by defending Portugal against their machinations or by preventing them from having their own way in Turkey. There can be no doubt that he saw from the very beginning that neither Greek liberties nor English interests would be advanced by the unfettered action of Russia in the Balkan peninsula, and he set himself to work to strengthen the influence of his country in Greece. He became aware of a plan, distinctly favoured by the Russian court, to set up an autonomous State with Capo d'Istria as its prince; and at the same time he knew that an increasingly powerful sentiment in Russia was urging the Government to go to war with Turkey. He re-

* See the author's "New Greece," p. 304.

solved that the question of Greek independence—the possible importance whereof in the future development of European politics he plainly foresaw—should on no account be settled by the exclusive action of the Czar.

So widely had Canning diverged in 1824 from the “continental policy” of his predecessor at the Foreign Office. So far had he progressed in the establishment of an English policy, and in the confirmation of a national English tradition.

In 1823 the Emperor Alexander had attempted once more to find work for the Holy Alliance. He proposed a conference of the Powers at St Petersburg, in order to arrange terms between the Turks and the Greeks, and to this proposal Austria at once acceded. But Canning, firmly resolved both to thwart the Alliance and to keep the initiative in Greek affairs out of Russia's hands, was at no loss for an excuse to refuse the invitation. The Greek leaders as well as the Porte had declined all offers of mediation, and on this ground alone he gave it as his opinion that it would be useless to attempt an arrangement. The coolness which he displayed on this occasion seems to have given great umbrage to the continental Ministers, and Metternich in particular resented the independent action of the English Government. In a private letter to Nesselrode he threw out a hint that “the true Alliance” would do well to consider how it might best assert its dignity against “the friend and protector of rebels.”

If however Canning had been in any sense the protector of the Greeks up to this time, he had certainly acted with strict impartiality. He recognised the belligerent rights of the insurgents—for, as he put it to the

Turks, the only alternative was to regard them as pirates, and it would be monstrous to give that character to a population of "millions of souls." But in doing this, and whilst expressing his inability to hinder private individuals in England from giving assistance to the Greeks, he insisted on the strict observance by the latter of international law. And his efforts were directed quite as much to the preservation of peace between Russia and Turkey as they were towards securing fair play between the combatants.

Another ground on which Canning declined the Conference in 1823 was that Russia had broken off diplomatic intercourse with the Porte, and he considered that her mission ought to be re-established before the united Powers attempted to mediate. This was manifestly a powerful and logical argument, and it was an argument reflecting credit and dignity on the Minister who made it. The Russian Government, which doubtless found it very difficult to resist the desire of the nation to go to war, obstinately declined to appoint an Ambassador. A demand had been made upon Turkey for the evacuation of the Danubian Principalities, and Lord Strangford had used every possible effort to induce the Porte to comply with this condition. The Porte yielded in May, 1824, and the Czar at once nominated a representative for the Constantinople mission. On this Canning, who had again been urged to take part in a Conference at St Petersburg—not in the interests of the Holy Alliance, but for the special consideration of a plan which had been put forward by Nesselrode—was disposed to enter into the concert; but the premature disclosure of the Russian scheme, and the vehement repudiation of the scheme by Turks and Greeks alike, added to the fact that Russia had not yet fulfilled her promise as to the

appointment of an Ambassador to the Porte, led him to withdraw his conditional assent.

It is important to note the reasons for Canning's action at this juncture of affairs. It was far from being a capricious isolation of England from the Eastern Powers on which he had decided to base his conduct; his motives are plain, they do him credit, and they were in entire harmony with the disposition of the English nation. He declined to go to a Conference for nominal objects which could not be attained, and at the risk of bringing about the very results which he dreaded. He saw—as he expressed himself in Parliament—that “in lending ourselves to an undertaking which we ourselves believed to be utterly useless, we must either assign to the Parliament and people of this country reasons for our conduct by which in fact it was not actuated, and must express hopes which in fact we did not feel—a proceeding which was totally out of the question; or else, by declaring frankly our reasons for engaging in so unpromising a negotiation, we should betray the secret, and thereby destroy the illusion, by which the Emperor of Russia was to be fortified against the warlike impulsion of his people.”

Englishmen have decided that this was an occasion on which their Minister was completely justified in refusing to participate in the European concert. It was not a straightforward concert; it was not a possible concert; it was not a concert from which any good result could ensue. There are times when the joint action of the Powers is necessary to the welfare of the community, but there are also times when it would be clearly injurious. Canning had not set himself against the Holy Alliance to fall thus easily into another snare of a similar kind. He knew with whom he had to deal, and he

preferred to incur the displeasure of Nesselrode and Metternich rather than fall back into the "continental system" by making himself a party to intrigues and deceptions almost certain to end in unjust war. When his second refusal was communicated to Nesselrode the latter seems to have lost his temper. He at once declared that all deliberations between his Government and that of England, both with reference to the relations of Russia and Turkey and with reference to the affairs of Greece, were thenceforth absolutely at an end. To this message Canning replied phlegmatically enough. He observed that "the Emperor was master, to do as he pleased," that the declaration of Count Nesselrode was "an ebullition which would probably pass away," and that "ere long the two countries would probably find themselves again in the same path."

This blunt method of procedure which was characteristic of Canning's diplomacy soon told upon Nesselrode. Mr Stratford Canning was sent in 1825 as our Ambassador to St Petersburg, and after he had informed the Russian Government that "if Count Nesselrode was not prepared to listen to what he had been instructed to communicate on the part of his Government upon the Greek question, he could not delay making application to the Emperor for his audience of leave," the resolution of the Czar and his Minister was relaxed, and negotiations were resumed. The English Ambassador then calmly repeated the original offer of his Government—that England would entertain the question of a joint mediation if the Russian mission were re-established, and if either belligerent should apply to the Allies for their good offices.

Against a policy so straightforward and so consistently just there is really no chance for the more tortuous

modes of diplomatic action. As the cool and persistent man succeeds in everyday life where the passionate and the subtle miss their way, so Canning, who had elected to be thoroughly English in dealing with English interests abroad, gained on this occasion one of the most notable triumphs of his life. After the Continental Powers had vainly attempted to arrive at an agreement amongst themselves, and had only managed to emphasize their differences of opinion, they "one and all began to look to England for assistance." Before the end of October 1825—"the same year in which the Alliance had been offended by the recognition of Spanish America, and Russia had refused to discuss in anywise the subject of Greece with the British Government," the Russian, Austrian, and French Governments had separately expressed their wish to Canning that he would take the question into his own hands, since England was "the only Power which could bring the state of affairs in Greece to a satisfactory settlement."*

The appeal was as gratifying to England as to Canning individually, but he did not hastily jump at the chance. "Things are not ripe," he wrote to a friend, "for our interference. We must not (like our good Allies) interfere in vain. If we act we must finish what is to be done."

Meanwhile the English Government had been carefully assembling the materials for future use. The attitude of impartiality between Turkey and Greece had been most scrupulously maintained, and Canning's dealings with the Porte had been so judicious that, in spite of his recognition of Greece as a belligerent, and in spite of the interval between the mission of Lord Stratford and the mission of Mr Stratford Canning, when we

* Stapleton, ch. 12.

were represented at Constantinople by a simple *Chargé d'Affaires*, our influence and credit with the Divan were scarcely impaired. At the same time the overtures of the Greeks were received with much circumspection, not to say with a little show of rudeness. The delegates in London had offered to accept an English protectorate, and when that was declined they asked Canning to nominate a king. The Provisional Government in Greece formally put the country under our protection. But Canning not merely refused to have what was thus urgently pressed upon him—he desired the Greeks to abstain from anything calculated to wound the susceptibilities of the Powers, and went out of his way to check the voluntary aid which was being rendered to the insurgents from this country. In the meantime he did not cease to urge the re-establishment of the Russian mission at Constantinople, and to recommend peaceful counsels to the Turks and Greeks.

The death of the Czar in 1826 suddenly brought the whole matter to a head. In Alexander there had been removed one of the surest pledges of peace in the East; for it was undoubtedly his personal influence alone which had restrained the nation from a Turkish war. His successor Nicholas set out with a declaration in which he announced himself as being determined to proceed in the path marked out by the Czar Alexander; and care was taken at the same time to ascribe to the late Czar a resolution in favour of immediate war. Canning now saw that his time for action had come, and as soon as he saw this he put his plans in execution.

His idea had always been to save the Greeks from destruction by bringing pressure to bear on the Porte without a Russian invasion. So long as he had been able to prevent this invasion, or so long as the Czar

abstained from war, he could afford to wait for the golden opportunity. If his efforts on behalf of Greece were deliberate, and if the long delay had imposed terrible sacrifices on the insurgents, the result proved that his method had been effectual. But now it appeared impossible that the policy which he had hitherto pursued should continue to avail him. Russia would certainly fight unless he could persuade her that she might attain her object without recourse to arms, and it happened by a fortunate coincidence that at the same moment the Greek Government had appealed to Mr Stratford Canning for English mediation.

The Duke of Wellington therefore, who was proceeding to St Petersburg on a special congratulatory mission to the new Czar, was instructed to inform the Russian Government that England was prepared to mediate both between the Turks and Greeks, and between Russia and the Porte; and in the event of Russia's declining this proposal, he was to assent to a joint mediation by England and Russia between Turkey and Greece. The result of the Duke's mission was the signature of the Protocol of April, 1826, by which the two contracting Powers agreed to propose to the Porte the establishment of a tributary Greek State, and to propose to Austria, France, and Prussia the joint guarantee of this State by the five Great Powers.

The policy of Canning in turning aside from the idea of a general conference, and in seeking to arrange the Greek question by a limited combination, must of course be judged by the light of contemporary European politics. The principle, at least, was unsound; it smacked of the Whig or Dutch policy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and needs to be ex-

plained before it can be approved. Canning has himself detailed for us the reasons which guided his action in 1826-7; and his statement is interesting even for the present generation.* But however necessary this course may have appeared to him, and however great the success of his policy as a whole, the partial combinations into which he now entered are in themselves the least admirable features of the tradition which he left behind him.

The difficulty of his position in regard to the peculiar attitude of the Powers to each other, and especially in view of the Holy Alliance which had forced upon England her policy of isolation, cannot be left out of sight. The last clause of the Protocol of 1826, providing for the co-operation of the Allies, was adopted on Canning's own suggestion; and this recognition of a sound international doctrine was at once construed by the Prussian Government (with a malicious expression of satisfaction) as giving countenance to "the principle of an unasked authoritative interference of the (Holy) Alliance."† In spite of this misconception and difficulty, it is to be observed that most of the subsequent acts and instruments for which the English Government was responsible during the progress of the Greek question were carried out only after the co-operation of France, Austria, and Prussia, had been scrupulously invited. It was not Canning's fault that France alone entered heartily into the combination with England and Russia.

The events of our own generation have had the result of making us thoroughly familiar with the treatment of the Greek question by the Ministry of Canning. The embodiment of the St Petersburg Protocol

* Appendix, E.

† Stapleton, ch. 16.

in the Treaty of July, 1827, with the interpreting instructions to our representative at Constantinople and to the commander of the English fleet in the Mediterranean, virtually complete the record so far as he is concerned. That which came afterwards was the natural result of his acts, though it is possible that he foresaw neither Navarino nor the creation of an absolutely independent Greece. Firmly as the Allies had resolved to bring the Greek war to an end, and to stop the Turkish and Egyptian massacres, and easily as the Treaty might be construed as warranting the use of force by the allied fleets, the joint instructions to the English, Russian, and French commanders were that they should take the utmost care to prevent their acts from degenerating into hostilities. Canning's aim had always been to maintain peace, more particularly between Russia and Turkey. He had advanced to the point of admitting that if any hostile action should be necessary, or should follow inevitably from the mediation which had been entered upon, it would be better that this action should be taken by the three Powers conjointly than by Russia alone. This contingency seems to have been at least contemplated from the time of the accession of the Emperor Nicholas; and the possibilities of the future were clearly in sight when the Secret Article of the Treaty of London—proposed by the French and accepted by the other negotiators—was agreed to on the day after the principal articles had been signed.*

* It was agreed in this Secret Article that "if within the term of one month the Porte does not accept the armistice proposed in the 6th Article of the patent Treaty, or if the Greeks refuse to carry it into execution, the High Contracting Powers shall declare to either of the contending parties which may be disposed to continue hostilities, or

As a matter of fact, Canning died on the 8th of August—one month after the signature of the Treaty—and the battle of Navarino was fought on the 20th of October. It may be that if the English Minister had lived the Allied fleets would not have fired a shot, and Russia would not have invaded Turkey in 1828. This must be matter of conjecture only; and so also must be the development which would have been given to the Greek question under the continued guidance of Canning. It is sufficient for his fame that he added the virtual liberation of Greece to the recognition of the South American Republics; that he not only destroyed the Holy Alliance but exacted the respect and admiration of Europe; and that by adopting a national system of foreign policy he extended and transmitted to succeeding generations some of our best and noblest traditions.

to both of them if necessary, that the said High Powers intend to exert all the means which circumstances may suggest to their prudence for the purpose of obtaining the immediate effects of the armistice of which they desire the execution, by preventing as far as possible all collision between the contending parties; and, in consequence, immediately after the above-mentioned declaration the High Powers will jointly exert all their efforts to accomplish the object of such armistice, without, however, taking any part in the hostilities between the two contending parties. Immediately after the signature of the present Additional Article, the High Contracting Powers will, consequently, transmit to the admirals commanding their respective squadrons in the Levant *conditional instructions in conformity with the arrangements above declared.*" These conditional instructions were of a pacific, or at any rate of a negative character, and it was maintained by the Governments of the three Powers that they could not be held to justify the destruction of the Turko-Egyptian fleet. It was the Turks who opened fire in the Bay of Navarino; but it was the Allied Admirals who, in their zeal to keep a particularly *close* watch on the slave-dealers (in accordance with their instructions), sailed well within the Turkish line of fire.

VI.

PALMERSTON'S FOREIGN POLICY.

[Henry Temple, Lord Palmerston,	. . .	Born Oct. 1784
M.P. for Newport ; Junior Lord,	. . .	1807
Secretary at War (<i>Perceval & Liverpool Admin.</i>),		1809—1828
Foreign Secretary (<i>Grey Admin.</i>),	. . .	Nov. 1830—Nov. 1834
Foreign Secretary (<i>Melbourne Admin.</i>),		Apr. 1835—Aug. 1841
Foreign Secretary (<i>Russell Admin.</i>),	. . .	July 1846—Dec. 1851
Home Secretary (<i>Aberdeen Admin.</i>),	. . .	Dec. 1852—Jan. 1855
Prime Minister (<i>Defeated on Chinese War</i>),		Feb. 1855—Mar. 1857
Prime Minister (<i>Defeated on Conspiracy Bill</i>),		Apr. 1857—Feb. 1858
Prime Minister until Death,	. . .	June 1859—Oct. 1865]

HENRY TEMPLE, the collateral descendant of William the Third's namesake and friend, could hardly have failed to be influenced by the popular foreign policy of Canning, and ultimately to develop into a Whig. It is true that he opened his long political career as a Tory, the nominee of Perceval, the pupil of Lord Malmesbury, the steady adherent of Lord Liverpool, the effective administrator whose best speeches were in favour of vast and increasing armaments. But the period of the Napoleonic wars had been proved in many cases to be a powerful solvent of Whig principles, especially in young men. Motives similar to those which had made Canning a client of Pitt drew the young Irish viscount in the train of Pitt's successors, and curiously enough the two politicians liberated themselves together from the unbending Toryism which recognised Eldon for its most ardent leader.

There were nevertheless great and characteristic differ-

ences, as well as notable similarities, between Canning and the statesman who, after a brief interval, succeeded Canning in the direction of our foreign policy. Palmerston never enjoyed the popularity and favour which were lavished on the elder man. During the first stages of his career he had few friends in society, fewer in political circles, and scarcely any beyond the seas. His colleagues did not greatly care for him, and Lord Liverpool more than once attempted to send him into honourable obscurity. Like Canning he received offers of positions which would have brought him mere wealth and esteem in place of the ripest fruits of ambition ; but whilst Canning was rescued from suppression by his own brilliance and the intervention of his fellow-countrymen, Palmerston reserved himself for his future triumphs by quiet confidence and tenacity. Like Canning again, Palmerston offended the uncompromising Tories by declaring for Catholic Emancipation ; and thus and otherwise he leaned towards the Whigs. On some questions indeed, as (in middle life) on the question of Reform, he was more liberal-minded than Canning ; but on the crucial questions of foreign politics he was less courageously attached to the cause of struggling nationalities, and less generously consistent. If the comparison were pushed into the domains of scholarship, oratory, and mental refinement, a wide gap would be found to exist between the polished and trenchant Anti-Jacobin and the homely, downright, ungrammatical talker and letter-writer who divided his time between statecraft, the turf, and the nursing of his moderate patrimony. As for the distinctions of their foreign policies, these became more manifest and significant with every act of Palmerston's later career.

The death of Lord Liverpool threw upon many of the

most active politicians of that day the necessity of making, or at least contemplating, a definite election between rapidly diverging courses. There was as much (or more) difference between Canning and Eldon as between Canning and Grey; and when the former became First Lord of the Treasury the lack of harmony amongst the Liverpool Tories was converted into an open breach. They who chose to follow Canning, and to retain or accept office under the popular Commoner, virtually by that act severed their political connection with the party which contained Eldon, Wellington, Bathurst, Herries, and the other seceders. The Coalition which now came into power was in fact the nucleus of that broad Liberal party which, without homogeneity for some twenty years to come, was to wield power in England during the greater part of four decades. In this party were included from time to time old Whigs who could pose as Tories and old Tories who could join hands with the Whigs; Whigs who could consistently make common cause with rivals in process of conversion, and Tories who, in spite of Canning's appeal to popular opinion or of Peel's logical evolutions, "came round by instinct" (as Palmerston put it) "to the oat-sieve."

On the formation of the Goderich Ministry Palmerston's advancing Whiggism was emphasized by the king's frustration of his appointment as Chancellor of the Exchequer. His four months' tenure of office under the Duke of Wellington, in combination with Huskisson and the other Canningites, though it was the result of an honourable and liberal invitation from the Duke, proved to Palmerston the impracticability of further alliance with even the moderate Tories. On the morrow of his acceptance of a place in the Cabinet he wrote to his

brother that he liked the Whigs much better than the Tories, and agreed with them much more. No doubt, however, he had seen strong reason for taking office, and he saw strong reason for remaining at his post after he had undertaken it. When Grant threatened to resign on a domestic matter Palmerston urged him to reconsider his resolution, in as much as the Canningites must act together, and if they all went out of office the consequence would be a purely Tory Government that would speedily throw over all those measures on which Canning had founded his fame. "We should break immediately with Russia, probably also with France, back out of the Greek treaty, and unite ourselves again with Metternich, and adopt the apostolical party in Spain and Portugal." *

The dispositions of Palmerston in regard to foreign affairs, and the shrewdness of perception which at all times characterized him, are conspicuous in his letters and journal during the few years succeeding the death of Canning. He divined at once that Metternich would begin to court the English connection. He considered that "the smash at Navarino" was "a display of power and an indication of determination" which the Turks would appreciate, and believed that it would smooth rather than increase our difficulties. He was strongly in favour of a bold policy in Greece, proposing that England and France should carry out a joint occupation of the Morea, and urging that the Government should demand the return of the Greek captives shipped to Alexandria at the end of 1827, in spite of Admiral Codrington's fleet. When the Duke of Wellington recommended to the Cabinet a programme anything but generous to the Greek insurgents, he "expressed a strong objection to

* Lord Palmerston's *Journal*, March 28, 1828.

the limit of the Morea, as at variance with the spirit and principles both of protocol and treaty, because permanent pacification could not be looked for when large districts, long in revolt, were excluded from the settlement." He maintained that even the occupation of the provinces by a joint expedition "could not produce a settlement of the Greek question except through the prostration of Turkey. The blockade of the Dardanelles must be ineffectual unless we became actually at war with Turkey ; since, till we obtained belligerent rights, we should not be able to stop the only material supplies, namely, corn and other provisions, which would be brought by neutrals. But to land a sufficient army, and sweep the Turks from Greece, would execute the treaty practically ; and then the formal acquiescence of Turkey became less important."

It is evident that the tradition of Canning was already being developed in the hands of his disciples. Though Palmerston affirmed that England ought not in any case to go to war with Turkey, he had advised more than one act which would probably have led to war ; and he approved the co-operation of the English and Russian fleets in the Mediterranean after the Russian armies had invaded Turkey, which his former leader would never have done. But it was neither love of Russia nor political animosity against Turkey which made Palmerston incline to this programme of action. His motive no doubt was the desire that English policy (that is, for the present, the policy of Canning) should prevail, and that it should be carried out with spirit and thoroughness. In 1829 he wrote that "one's notion that Russia could eat up Turkey at a mouthful has been utterly dissipated ;" but he added, "for my part I heartily wish her success, as the only chance of making a good settlement of the Greek State." He went on to lament

that the Government was not more liberal in this respect—not merely in sympathy with Russia as a probable deliverer of Greece, but also in the will and desire to strike a blow on its own account for the heroic and long-enduring race.

Up to the time when Palmerston accepted the Foreign Secretaryship in Lord Grey's Ministry he had had at most a consultative voice in regard to the external affairs of the country. He had been as a rule the most liberal member of the Cabinets in which he was included, and he had rendered all the assistance in his power to Lord Dudley, in the efforts of the latter to give effect to the popular policy of Canning. It was partly if not mainly on account of the known liberality of his views, and because he was the ablest of the Canningites who remained generally faithful to the traditions of his master, that Lord Grey placed him at the Foreign Office.

Critical as the time was with us at home, domestic concerns did not render the country indifferent to complications abroad. The general election of 1830 followed close upon the French and Belgian revolutions, and now as in 1789 the influence of our continental neighbours was distinctly manifested in England. The long agony of Greece had powerfully affected the minds of a large number of Englishmen, and the partial success of the French outbreak, resulting as it did in the establishment of a revolutionary and constitutional monarchy, enlisted the popular sympathies. The disorganization of our foreign policy ever since the death of Canning had disgusted all those who had admired Canning's work, and the nation was glad of an opportunity to call stronger and more generous men to the helm. The heart of England wished Greece to be free—wished Belgium to be free—wished to ensure the stability of the new French

government, or at any rate to give it sympathy and fair play. In short, the Tory supremacy which had virtually existed in this country for forty years had come to an end, and it was on foreign questions almost as much as on home questions that the revulsion had taken place. The continental policy of Castlereagh and the national policy of Canning—it is hard to say which of the two in chief—had trained the country to a genuine liberality of opinion in foreign affairs. The nightmare of the Napoleonic wars, and of all the ills which they brought in their train, was passing away, and in its stead the nation had been taught to recognise its ancient, characteristic, magnanimous traditions, which made it the abettor rather than the destroyer of revolutionary governments—the champion of liberty against all odds and oppositions rather than the ally of despots for the restoration of dynasties.

If this sentiment was less clearly expressed, and less frequently interpreted in words and in print, during the electoral contest of 1830 and the bitter struggle for reform, it was instinctively present in the mind of every Liberal; and from that time to this it has been growing stronger and more intense. We know that Lord Grey had felt it when he was a young man—that the Whigs had given Canning their support on the strength of it, even though Canning was obstinately opposed to domestic reform—that the possession and profession of this sentiment had converted many of the Canningite Tories into Liberals, as they would probably have converted Canning himself if he had lived three years longer. And thus it was in every sense natural and fitting that Palmerston should be offered and should accept the seals of the Foreign Office in 1830.

The responsibilities which Lord Palmerston now took upon himself add greater significance to his utterances of opinion than they had borne up to this date. It had been easier for him to criticise the crude ideas of the Duke of Wellington, in letters to his brother and his brother-in-law, than it was to pick his steps in the thorny path on which he had entered. But opportunities soon occurred to him of exhibiting the peculiar qualities which made him (in general) more successful as a Foreign Minister than he had ever been as a War Minister—faculties for business, readiness of device, tact, clear-sightedness, indomitable energy and enterprise. No sooner had he taken office—feeling, as he put it, “like a man who has plumped into a mill-race, scarcely able by all his kicking and plunging to keep his head above water”—than he found questions of the utmost importance demanding instant solution. He was however far from being daunted. Acting boldly on his instincts—of course with the deliberative assistance of his colleagues—he soon shaped out a definite course of policy.

In November 1830, Lord Aberdeen was still at the Foreign Office. On December 20, the independence of Belgium was affirmed by the representatives of the Powers in London. The Belgian question was but the avenue to one of far greater dimensions, for French statesmen and diplomatists (who had long been complaining that English jealousies stood in the way of their development on the eastern frontier) saw in the dissolution of the Netherlands a pretext and occasion of advance. The Belgian Assembly had offered the crown to a son of Louis Philippe. Palmerston at once gave Talleyrand to understand that the acceptance of this offer was an impossibility, and that the ambitions of the French Ministers were, to say the least of it, ill-timed.

It was not that he undervalued the friendship of France, or that he could afford to dispense with her co-operation, but he knew that these same considerations weighed still more effectively with France herself.

In the re-settlement of Belgium and Holland, and in the shaping of his conduct towards France, Palmerston had to decide quickly and act energetically. He decided and acted not so much by reference to traditions as by drawing on his own resources, and by selecting the policy which commended itself to him at the moment.

There was, or there may appear to have been, some peril thus early in the abnormally decisive manner of treatment which Palmerston accorded to the questions which arose with foreign Powers. His maxim was clearly to produce a moral effect—not the effect of mere display, but the calculated effect which must be caused by a belief in England's complete readiness to strike if it should come to striking. He wrote to Lord Granville at Paris (January 27, 1831), instructing him to question the French Government concerning three or four ships which were fitting out at Toulon, and concluded his letter by saying:—"It is no harm that the French should think that we are a little upon the alert with respect to our navy, because I believe it is the fear of a naval war which has greatly tended to induce the French Government to make the efforts necessary for the preservation of peace." This is one of the first of many proofs which Palmerston gave of his belief in the efficacy of brag, especially when qualified by the assumption of a reasonable suspicion on our own part. A more notable instance occurred in 1859, when his open and repeated imputations of French hostility very nearly pushed us into war with a nation really anxious to be on good terms with us.

War, indeed, was actually threatened by Palmerston in 1831, in order to prevent the acceptance of the Belgian crown for the Duc de Nemours; and here, then, we find him committed in his first year of office as Foreign Minister to a mood of diplomacy which, though it might have the same objects in view as Canning had, or would have had under the circumstances, was certainly in contrast with Canning's ordinary mood. Canning never threatened war. He sent the Duke of Wellington to St Petersburg, and Mr Stratford Canning to Constantinople, and even went himself to Paris—each occasion being one of delicacy and danger—for the very purpose of avoiding the necessity of menace, open or implied. His cause of quarrel with Spain, and through Spain with France and Austria, was real enough; no one could doubt his spirit; and yet he did not menace the Spanish Court. He was thoroughly resolved to defend the integrity and independence of Portugal, but he did not set up his post and throw down his glove. He sat calmly and quietly awaiting his *casus fœderis*; and the result of this deliberate attitude was the withdrawal of the French, the rapid right-about of the Spaniards, and the involuntary respect of Metternich.

Palmerston might have brought matters to a climax a little sooner, but he could not have arranged them more successfully, or with so slight expenditure of force. His quicker methods were employed at imminent risk of making enemies or storing up grudges. It appears almost marvellous, when we read his despatches and instructions, that we escaped in his time another war with France. He seems to have set out with the idea that Louis Philippe and his Ministers were playing a designedly anti-English game, and that they took a delight in saying offensive things to English Ministers.

"Pray take care," he writes to Lord Granville, "in all your conversation with Sebastiani, to make him understand that our desire for peace will never lead us to submit to affront either in language or in act." * And again: "Sebastiani really should be made to understand that he must have the goodness to learn to keep his temper; or, when it fails him, let him go to vent his ill-humour upon some other quarter, and not bestow it upon England." In another letter he writes: "Pérrier is honest, but it is not in human nature that he should not every now and then be swayed by the dishonesty of Sebastiani, and, I fear I must add, the want of fixed principle of the King." And in another: "We are deeply convinced that it is greatly for the interest of England and of France that their friendship should be intimate and unbroken. But true friendship cannot exist without perfect confidence on both sides. . . . Suspicion and distrust are fatal to confidence and friendship."

It is plain that Palmerston's distrust of France—which was either exaggerated or dwelt upon with excessive emphasis—was a peril to the friendship of the two countries, and greater than was natural under the circumstances. The tone of his letters being so downright and forcible, everything was made to hinge upon the discretion of our representatives abroad. We could not have had a safer medium at Paris in 1831 than Lord Granville; but there were instances in other places and at other times when men of less tact and suavity, possibly rendered aggressive by the stimulation of despatches from the Foreign Office, committed the double fault of

* See the selections from Lord Palmerston's correspondence in Lord Dalling and Bulwer's *Life*.

offending friendly Powers and failing to secure the objects of their diplomacy.

No doubt there was much difficulty in the Belgian question, and especially in the matter of the fortresses, and in the incident of the French occupation. But the doubt suggests itself whether Lord Palmerston may not have increased his difficulty by too much insistence. It is at least questionable wisdom to take the bull by the horns when it is disposed to turn its tail upon you. On the whole, however, the English Minister conducted the negotiations with an ability, a vigour and success, which were fully recognised by all the Governments concerned in them.

His share in the settlement of the Greek question was slight in comparison with the part which he took in establishing the Kingdom of Belgium. He had in reality little to do with the final arrangements in this case, and one is inclined to wish that he had done a great deal more. The French occupation, the Russian War, the London Conference of 1830—when Greek independence was at length resolved upon—had paved the way for a settlement before Palmerston came into office. But he is saddled with a portion of the responsibility for the Mediation of 1832, which was marked by unfortunate timidity and weakness. We might have expected better things from the statesman who in the Wellington Cabinet had been more favourably inclined to the Greeks than any of his colleagues.* But perhaps it was impossible for Palmerston to go beyond the terms of the instrument which was agreed upon in May between England, France, and Russia, and which was accepted and ratified by the Porte in the following July. The

* Unless we except Peel, who was even then anxious to confer independence on the new State.

time was scarcely propitious for Greece. There was a great desire on the part of the three Powers to close a question which had for so many years engaged and strained the diplomacy of Europe. France and England were still perplexed by the affairs of the Netherlands, and were actually, on however small a scale, at war with Holland. Russia had had her war with Turkey, and was at the moment involved in controversy with the Western Powers in regard to Poland.* And there were other pending matters of great and general importance which must have increased the desire of the Powers to close the Greek question. Nevertheless the arrangement which they concluded was anything but a piece of creditable statesmanship. They made a Greece altogether too cramped for healthy existence and development, saddled her with a great debt and an extravagant expenditure, fixed on her an incompetent boy-king with a foreign court and army, and expected her forthwith to produce the fruits of a mature national organisation. There is no question that Palmerston could have done better ; but

* The virtual revision of the Treaty of Vienna in respect of Holland and Belgium seems to have encouraged Russia to trample on the clauses of the same Treaty relating to Poland. The Poles had received a constitution, or a sanction for their constitution, at Vienna, and Nicholas now punished their revolt by confiscating their liberties. Palmerston protested against this course in a despatch to Lord Heytesbury, apparently communicated to Count Nesselrode. In this despatch he was thoroughly in accord with the English Tradition. He pointed out that, even if the entire Polish nation had taken part in the revolt, this fact would prove the existence of a deep-seated discontent which was not likely to be removed by a sweeping abrogation of the constitution. And he added that, because a war between two States is held to dissolve existing treaties, it did not follow that civil war annulled constitutions. Lord Dalling and Bulwer quotes from Lord Palmerston's papers the notes for his despatches to Lord Heytesbury.—*Life*, vol. ii., p. 127.

Wellington and Aberdeen had spoiled the business which Canning had begun, and the Whig Foreign Minister was apparently too much occupied with Belgium to pay much attention to the interests of Greece.

The first stage of Palmerston's career as Foreign Minister closes in 1834, with the dismissal of the Melbourne Ministry; and we are already in a position to judge of his character and capacity in office. In the first place, it is clear that Lord Palmerston had no system, strictly so called—no system based professedly upon tradition and precedent; or upon the maxims and acts of a predecessor. His system was to be without a system. His policy was to decide for himself, as the emergency seemed to require, and by reference to his individual conception of the nature and necessities of the case. He sought to have his own way, and generally had it, by dint of insistence, and even menace. He admired Canning, and began by calling himself Canning's disciple in foreign policy; but his individuality was too strong to be subjected to the example of any master, however wise. His was no policy of the pigeon-hole; he had perhaps too little respect for tradition; he made the welfare of his country and the success of his negotiations depend on the vigour and firmness of his own conduct. When he happened to take precisely the right view of a particular problem, and when he was well served by our representatives at foreign courts, he certainly reaped triumphs of a more or less complete and brilliant kind; but the risk was manifestly too great for any statesman to run. If either he or his instruments failed—and both failed at times—the country was inevitably the chief sufferer.

Thus Palmerston, on more than one or two occasions, obstructed rather than advanced the national tradition. There was too much of his own personality imported into the transaction of public affairs. He did too little to construct upon the basis of those who had gone before him.

With this, and partly as a consequence of this, Palmerston was at times extremely unpopular in Europe. A faithful chronicler, if not always a very close observer of contemporary English politics, records one or two judgments passed upon the Foreign Secretary in his earlier days which are not without significance. "Madame de Lièven told me," writes Greville, on Feb. 13, 1834, "that it was impossible to describe the contempt as well as dislike which the whole corps diplomatique had for Palmerston, and, pointing to Talleyrand, who was sitting close by, 'surtout lui.' They have the meanest opinion of his capacity, and his manners are the reverse of conciliatory." On the 23d of September in the same year he writes: "He (Melbourne) asked me if I thought it was true that Talleyrand had taken such offence at Palmerston that he would not return here on that account, and if I knew what it was that had affronted him; whether any deficiency in diplomatic punctilio, or general offensiveness of manner. I told him I had no doubt it was true, and that the complaints against Palmerston were so general that there must be some cause for them; and though Madame de Lièven might be prejudiced against him, *all* the foreign ambassadors could not be so." A little later we find Greville testifying to Lord Palmerston's qualities as a man of business, but he still talks of him as most unpopular, both at the Foreign Office and at the Embassies (Feb. 17, 1835). Eighteen months afterwards he records an opinion of

Talleyrand's, that "there was but one statesman" in the Ministry, "and that was Palmerston;" and he expresses surprise to hear the Foreign Secretary spoken of in high terms by those who knew him officially. "Lady Granville, a woman expert in judging, thinks his capacity first-rate; that it approaches to greatness from his enlarged views, disdain of trivialities, resolution, decision, confidence, and above all, his contempt of clamour and abuse."

Decision and confidence were doubtless the most notable of Palmerston's characteristics; and not seldom they reached the point of obstinacy and self-will. It is not to be inferred from the observations which have preceded that he ever consciously threw off the influence of Canning, or repudiated his early sympathies with oppressed nationalities. In 1836 he writes privately to his brother complaining of the "scurvy" conduct of Louis Philippe in backing out of the Quadruple Alliance between England, France, Spain, and Portugal, the object of which was to exclude the Absolutist claimants to the thrones of the two last-named countries. The French king, he says, was as ambitious as Louis XIV., and was intriguing for crowns to put on his children's heads. "I hope," he writes, "there may be a counter revolution in Portugal; but so do not hope the Holy Alliance. They think the Constitution of 1820 may bring back Miguel and despotism again, as it did once before. They hate Pedro's charter, because it is too reasonable a system of government; an impracticable constitution is a thing to their heart."

At no time of his career was Palmerston more genuinely national, and more apparently inclined to take a radical view of the political situation, than when he occupied a place in Lord Melbourne's Cabinet. It is not a little strange, when we remember his undoubted want of

popularity in certain quarters, and especially abroad, to find that he was accused of a tendency to identify the interests of England with those of other nations. He took occasion to claim for himself and his colleagues, in 1839, that there never was an Administration which paid more attention to the commercial interests of the country ; and he declared in answer to his critics that the interest of England was the guiding principle of the Government. The charge certainly appears to have been unmerited ; and not long afterwards an opportunity occurred, in connection with a sulphur monopoly given to France by the King of Naples, of defending himself in the House of Commons.

This incident is one of special interest, because it illustrates not merely the action of Lord Palmerston as Foreign Secretary but also the commercial policy of England in an age when monopolies were still the basis of much of our foreign trade. In 1816 we had concluded a treaty with the kingdom of the Two Sicilies which placed the contracting States on a footing towards each other of the most favoured nation ; and amongst the stipulations was one to the effect that the Government of Naples should not grant to another State any mercantile privileges which might be injurious to British interests. In 1838 the sulphur monopoly in Sicily was granted to France for a consideration. The English Government protested, and when the Neapolitan king had more than once promised to abolish the monopoly, and to indemnify the English merchants who had been injured by the violation of the treaty, without keeping his promise, the fleet was sent to the Mediterranean, and captured a number of Neapolitan vessels. This act of war brought the Government of Naples to their senses, and the English demands were complied with.

There was of course something more for our Foreign Minister to proceed upon in this case than the exclusive consideration of British interests. The claim against Naples was based upon a treaty engagement, and Lord Palmerston was technically right in his insistence—"impatient" as he admitted this insistence to have been. But the whole incident was the reverse of creditable to us, and it belongs to a system and fashion of policy which have happily all but passed away. The Treaty itself was a quarter of a century old; it was from the first somewhat unequal in its provisions, and it was concluded under circumstances which left the Neapolitans very little to say in the matter. Moreover, the exaction of a monopoly of trade, general or particular, in the dominions of a weaker State, whether it rested upon the Treaty (as Palmerston declared) or only upon his interpretation of the Treaty (as the King of Naples maintained), was against all sound principles of international commerce. Shrewd as Palmerston was, and anxiously as he aimed at giving satisfaction to popular sentiment, wherever the national interests were concerned, he did not perceive that the promotion of our trade by such means as he saw fit to adopt—the employment of menace, the despatch of a fleet, the seizure of merchant vessels, the bombardment of towns—was in reality opposed to the sentiment and wishes of the nation. Perhaps it may not have been so before the inauguration of our Free Trade policy, and the passing of the Navigation Acts. But it was so from 1850 onwards; and Palmerston did not even then comprehend the fact.

This is all the more strange because he was professedly a disciple of Huskisson's, as he was one of the earliest official converts of Cobden's. He had gone with his colleagues to the country in 1841 on a platform distinctly condem-

natory of the principles of monopoly, abroad and at home. His familiar vindication of Free Trade at the outset of the session of 1842 bore witness to the development of his political ideas, and stamped him as an advocate of unfettered international commerce. But the acts with which he, and no other, discredited these liberal principles soon after their adoption by the country were in direct contradiction to his theories. The best known passage in his speech of February 9, 1842, is that in which he describes the object of natural laws and the dispensation of Providence as being, "that commerce may freely go forth, leading civilisation with one hand, peace with the other, to render mankind happier, wiser, better." But it was not as the mild nurse of peace and civilisation that English commerce had been made to figure just eighteen months before these words were spoken. It was not exactly in the interests of peace and civilisation that we seized the Greek merchant vessels in 1850, and waged the Chinese war seven years later. Even if Palmerston had persuaded himself that it was so, and had seen no inconsistency between his professions and his actions, the verdict of posterity will agree with the verdicts of the House of Commons and of the constituencies in regard to the last-mentioned perversions of our national foreign policy.

Incidents such as the seizure of the Neapolitan ships in 1840 must have been present in the mind of Peel when he declared, early in the course of his premiership, that he respected the rights and dignity of other States, "small as well as great, weak as well as strong," and that he looked on the use of "menace or force solely as a last extremity, legitimate only when it was absolutely necessary."

The details of the interventions in Greece and in

China, and the morals which are to be drawn from these chapters of our political history, are too trite to call for repetition. Lord Palmerston's repute as a Foreign Minister can never be dissociated from his conduct on these occasions, and his most discriminative admirers will be content to say, with his colleague, Lord Russell, that "the year 1840 saw the climax of his ability and success as a statesman." The mistakes of 1850 and 1857-9 deprived him of the title to be considered as occupying the highest rank amongst the Ministers who have shaped our policy abroad. That he was skilful and audacious in asserting the dignity of England, and in securing for her respect and deference in other lands, need hardly be said. "We are all proud of him," Peel admitted in 1850; but it was in opposing a vote of confidence in Palmerston's foreign policy that he rendered this tribute to his public services. Englishmen have for the most part agreed in the appreciation and reservations of Peel.

In one respect Lord Palmerston made a contribution to the traditions of English policy abroad which has exercised an important influence on every statesman who has succeeded him at the Foreign Office, and which for good or evil has been potent in its effects upon the course of European history. The reference of course is to the quadruple treaty of alliance signed in 1840 between England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia for the protection of the Turkish Empire. We have here a point of contact between the policy of Palmerston and the policy of Russell; for Lord Russell seems to have been specially consulted on the subject by his colleague before the proposal for the treaty was submitted to the

full Cabinet, and he gave his adhesion to the plan in the belief that it afforded the only alternative to an "abandonment of the Turkish Empire as a spoil to be scrambled for between Russia and France."*

The Porte had begun to reap poetical justice for the encouragement which it had given to its too powerful tributary in Egypt. Mehemet Ali and his general Ibrahim had been carrying all before them in Syria; the Sultan was unable to resist; France was secretly laying her snares in the hope of securing predominance in the Levant and on the Nile; and English statesmen could scarcely be expected to entertain a doubt that Russia also would soon find a pretext for interference. The case of Turkey was desperate, and her ruin imminent. Potentially Egypt had an inexhaustible reserve of strength, not only in Africa but in Asia; and with the connivance of France and Russia the armies of the ambitious pashas would unquestionably have stripped the Sultan of a large portion of his dominions. It was for the English Government to decide whether they would risk the destruction of the Turkish power in Europe, which manifestly implied not the substitution of an Egyptian tyranny, but the aggrandisement of two European States, and the serious disturbance of international politics.

There are many Englishmen at the present moment who would not hesitate to say that this was a question with which it was not necessary to concern ourselves, and that it would have been better for us in the long run if we had let things take their course—even though France might have become paramount in Egypt and Syria, and Russia on the Bosphorus. Such a decision,

* Lord Russell's "Recollections and Suggestions," Ch. 2.

probably impossible for this country to-day, was certainly impossible in 1840. No Foreign Minister could at that juncture have contemplated the abandonment of Turkey; and least of all was Palmerston inclined to do so. He had, in fact, a problem to solve which was in many particulars identical with Canning's problem fourteen years before. In order to eliminate the danger from Russian intrigue he invited the Government of the Czar to enter into the engagement above-mentioned. The same proposal was virtually made to France; and when Louis Philippe and his Ministers declined his invitation Palmerston obtained the consent of the Cabinet to the quadruple treaty—though not until he had overcome the opposition of his colleagues by a threat of resignation.

No sooner was the treaty signed than he displayed his characteristic energy and promptitude. He had just settled what was known as the Sulphur question, and he expressed to his brother great satisfaction that the ships were "set free in that quarter," for there was "work for them to do" in the Levant. Perhaps no English Minister ever made more use of the fleet than Palmerston. He was always manipulating it, or advising its employment for one purpose or another; and rarely without manifestly advancing his designs and attaining his object. On this occasion his policy unquestionably succeeded, in so far that it checked the Egyptians, saved the Turks, baulked France, and kept a great temptation out of the way of Russia.

The opponents of Lord Palmerston's policy at this crisis—Holland and Clarendon, with many of the stauncher Whigs, and in some measure Lord Melbourne himself—seem to have been loth to take a course so offensive to France as that which the Foreign Minister suggested; and doubtless they were influenced at the

same time by a question as to our justification in taking up arms against the Egyptians. In and out of Parliament, moreover, there were the professed advocates of peace, economy, and international morality, who strenuously objected to the intervention of England in a matter of this kind. There were others, again, who stigmatised the action of the Government as a recrudescence of the old policy of maintaining the balance of power, and who denied that the alleged intrigues of France in Egypt could affect this balance in such a way as to render it imperative on England to oppose her, and to risk a quarrel with a neighbour with whom we ought to ally ourselves as closely as possible.

Comparatively little was said during the consideration of this question about the English route to India, mainly, of course, because the sea-route through the Egyptian isthmus had not yet been seriously contemplated. But it is none the less true that British interests in the East were present in Lord Palmerston's mind, as they had been present in Canning's, over and above the consideration of the balance of power in Europe. And it is advisable to remember this in tracing the progress of the tradition which chiefly distinguishes our foreign policy since the Congress of Vienna. The grounds on which nearly every English Minister has acted in observing this tradition are, first, that England is bound by her vital interests to prevent any powerful nation from controlling her route to India, and secondly, that she is bound by the same interests to prevent (as Lord Russell puts it) the abandonment of Turkey "as a spoil to be scrambled for."

The last of these arguments is one of very doubtful force, except in as much as it is associated with the first. The fiction that Constantinople is on the route to

India seems to be fast losing its hold on the imaginations of Englishmen ; and as soon as the constituencies are fully persuaded that the holder of Turkey in Europe cannot forbid our passage from Malta to Egypt they will probably care very little into whose hands the possessions of the Sultans may fall. But so long as India is ours, and so long as its present relations with the Home Government are maintained, the supreme necessity of guarding these relations from interruption must create for us an Eastern Question on the continent of Europe.

But have not all our statesmen, from the death of Canning to the year 1880, exaggerated the dangers menacing our communications with India, and enormously exaggerated the importance of keeping the continental Powers out of European Turkey ?

In the Aberdeen Administration of 1852, which waged the Crimean War on the latter ground especially, Lord Palmerston was at the Home Office—Lord John Russell, and subsequently Lord Clarendon, being Foreign Secretary. But as a member of the Cabinet, with a personal influence as strong as that of any of his colleagues, he was largely responsible for the inception and prosecution of this war. The responsibility was increased by his acceptance of the premiership in 1855, with practically the same Cabinet which Mr Roebuck's motion had compelled to resign—a course fully committing him to the defence of the late Government. His difficulty in this defence did not, however, consist in having to prove that the war itself was justifiable. No one asked him to do this. Almost the only persons in a prominent position who condemned the policy of the conflict with Russia were Cobden, Mr Bright, and the members of the Peace Party ; and they fell at

this period into extreme unpopularity. The nation at large was the real wager of the Crimean War; and in this we must conclude that it was untrue to its better and nobler traditions. Few persons in our day are at the pains of justifying the alliance with France or the conflict with Russia on such utterly insufficient grounds. That this conflict was in some sense the outcome of the tradition handed down from Canning to his successors it would be difficult to deny;* but how unlike the action of Canning in 1826 was the policy which made us the allies, if not the dupes, of "Napoleon the Little."

Immediately after the assumption of the premiership by Lord Palmerston, Mr Layard vigorously attacked the conduct of public affairs, and declared that what the country wanted was "not septuagenarian experience, but more of youthful activity and energy." No doubt administrative energy was one of the chief needs of the Aberdeen and Palmerston Cabinets. Palmerston himself had apparently exhausted his energy, or at any rate the spirit which had so often made his energy serviceable to the State, in the noteworthy diplomatic fiasco of 1851, when an unwarrantable expression of opinion in favour of Louis Napoleon's violation of the French constitution drew down upon him the reproof of the Queen, and caused his dismissal from Lord John Russell's Cabinet. His conduct on this occasion was the more

* The Emperor Nicholas complained that he had been misled by English statesmen into thinking that English and Russian policy on the Eastern Question nearly coincided. That he had some reason in this complaint can scarcely be doubted in view of the friendly *pourparlers* which took place between the Czar on the one part and Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen on the other, during a visit of the former to London in 1844. A memorandum apparently embodying the results of these *pourparlers*, and retained in our Foreign Office, is quoted in the Appendix (F).

remarkable because his policy and feeling had usually been anti-French, and his sympathies constitutional. He wrote to Lord Normanby, at Paris, after the imprisonment of the deputies and the carnage in the streets:—"Such a state of antagonism had arisen between the President and the Assembly that it was becoming every day more clear that their co-existence could not be of long duration; and it seemed to me better for the interests of France, and through them better for the interests of the rest of Europe, that the power of the President should prevail." Lord Palmerston had often complained of the previous French Governments that their policy and intrigues aped those of Bonaparte; and yet we find him at this crisis going out of his way to assist a new Bonaparte in defeating the liberties of a friendly nation.* His departure from diplomatic rule and etiquette was sufficiently expiated by loss of office. But it is impossible to exaggerate the mischievous character of Lord Palmerston's offence against the spirit of the English constitution, and against the traditions of national policy which he had received direct from the hands of Canning. The natural effect of his act was to make England an abettor of the worst possible kind of outrage on the rights of a neighbouring independent State.

The instinct which dictated his assurances to M. Walewski and his despatch to Lord Normanby was one entirely opposed to the best instincts of English statesmanship: it was an instinct of which Pitt would have been ashamed, which Castlereagh would have acknow-

* The memory of this spontaneous compliment to Napoleon was present in the minds of Englishmen when in 1858 Lord Palmerston introduced the Conspiracy to Murder Bill, and, under pressure of public opinion, was defeated on Mr Milner Gibson's amendment.

ledged to be against "the fundamental laws of the country," and which could never have existed in the heart of Canning. To have not only felt but acted upon such an instinct suffices to deprive Lord Palmerston of the title to be regarded as a national Foreign Minister, and spoils the record of his spirited policy on other occasions. He had often made the continental Governments respect us, even when he was defeating their cherished plans. His conduct in 1851 tended to make them despise us, even when we were playing into their hands.

VII.

LATER WHIG POLICY.

(1859-1866).

[Lord John Russell,	. . . . .	Born, 1792
M.P. for Tavistock,	. . . . .	1813
Paymaster of the Forces,	. . . . .	1830—1832
Supported the Reform Bill in the Commons,	. . . . .	1831—1832
Home Secretary (<i>Melbourne Admin.</i>),	. . . . .	1835—1839
Colonial Secretary	"	1839—1841
First Lord,	. . . . .	July 1846—Feb. 1852
Foreign Secretary (<i>Aberdeen Admin.</i>),	. . . . .	Dec. 1852—Feb. 1853
In Cabinet without office,	"	until June 1854
Lord President,	"	until Jan. 1855
Colonial Secretary (<i>Palmerston Admin.</i>),	. . . . .	1855
Foreign Secretary (<i>2d Palmerston Admin.</i>),	. . . . .	June 1859—Nov. 1865
Made an Earl,	. . . . .	July 30, 1861
First Lord,	. . . . .	Nov. 1865—June 1866]

THE Revolution of 1848, like the Revolution of 1789, was French in its inception, but European in its scope, causes, and results. Both these movements manifested themselves in almost every continental State, the manifestation varying in form according to the character and condition of the several peoples, though it seems to have been due in each case to the same motive power. England was no exception to the rule. She did not escape the revolution, but the shock was borne with less disturbance, because the original equilibrium was greater. And it was perhaps for this very reason, because they already possessed much of what other nations were striving for, that the people of this country became in-

volved in contests for the freedom of other countries rather than for their own. We made no great progress in domestic constitutional liberty on either occasion. We had fought our great fights in 1642 and 1688 : it was now demanded of us that we should pay what hitherto remained unpaid of the price of our successful revolutions in the seventeenth century.

As a consequence or sequel of the revolutions of 1789 and 1821 England secured the liberties of South America, Portugal, and Greece. As a sequel of the revolution of 1848 England confirmed the liberties of the Greeks, and played an important part in emancipating the Italians.

It was (naturally enough) the Whigs who took upon themselves the accomplishment of objects so consonant with their party traditions and so harmonious with the aims of the national genius of Englishmen. The best traditions of the Whigs, so far as their foreign policy is concerned, may be summed up in the phrase which has usually served them for a watchword. The theory of the Whig policy is based on "civil and religious liberty throughout the world;" and whenever the party has been true to its principles—whenever its statesmen, as distinguished from its mere place-hunters, have had the courage of their convictions, and have acted up to their political creed—this watchword has been justified. The career of Earl Russell affords apt illustration of the truth of what has been said.

Lord Russell occupies a position in English history which will probably appear more important to the next generation than it did to his own. He was defeated more frequently, he resigned more frequently, he was less generally influential and popular, than any of his principal colleagues; but he held office as a Liberal Cabinet Minister of first rank over a term

whose limits include the third part of a century. Throughout his life he was a consistent Whig, and his political professions varied remarkably little from the beginning to the end. He had not the initiation of Lord Palmerston, nor the genius of Mr Gladstone, nor the suavity of Lord Granville, nor the plodding ability of Lord Clarendon ; but he had the straightforwardness, the bluntness, the backbone which Englishmen delight to see in their Ministers, and he held high the standard of England's honour and generosity. His conduct during the Italian struggle for independence, and his attitude towards Europe in defence of the action of Sardinia in 1859-60, earned for him a title to the lasting gratitude of his countrymen. Of all Whig diplomatists up to the time of the re-unification of Italy he did most to give effect to the national and popular tradition which overlaps, though it does not coincide with, the tradition of his party.

The long revolutionary conflict in Italy, paralysed for a time by the Holy Alliance, but never absolutely crushed out, was renewed in 1848, paralysed again by the French troops in Rome, and once more revived under the championship of Sardinia. To serve his own ambitions Louis Napoleon made common cause with Victor Emmanuel, rescuing Lombardy from the Austrians in the campaign of 1859. The audacity of Garibaldi in 1860, and the ambitions of Prussia in 1866, practically completed the unification of the Peninsula. The part which England took in this memorable regeneration was purely passive, but it was a most important contribution to the success of the movement. When the Governments of the Powers in 1858 attempted a mediation between Austria on the one hand, and Sardinia and France on the other, England took the lead in the negotiations, and made

proposals which, if the court of Vienna had been less impracticable, might have rendered war unnecessary. Lord Malmesbury and Lord John Russell successively did their best to minimise the calamity when it had become inevitable; but Austria, underrating the difficulties with which she had to contend, interrupted the negotiations by a sudden resort to arms,—at the same time throwing upon England and her two Eastern neighbours the responsibility of encouraging revolution and rebellion. The fact was that Russia looked on the matter as a quarrel between Austria and France, and Gortchakoff was as anxious for the friendship of the former country as he was ill-disposed or indifferent towards the latter; whilst Prussia was already aiming at the extrusion of Austria from the Confederation, and was therefore quite prepared to see her weakened and humbled.

These two Governments, like the Government of France, had their special designs and ambitions in 1859, so that Austria was practically left without a friend in Europe. But the time for discrimination came in 1860, when Garibaldi drove King Ferdinand from Naples, and Victor Emmanuel marched through the Papal States. France had been satisfied, and had received her prize; Prussia had seen the humiliation of her rival, and there was nothing to be gained for any save the Italians in the complete liberation of the Peninsula. Therefore the heinousness of insurrection appeared to the continental courts in a strong light, and they began to protest against the perfidy of Sardinia. This would have been natural enough from them if they had not taken the opposite view so long as it suited their purpose. It may even be admitted that there was a noteworthy difference between the circumstances of the two years, and that the invasion

of Sicily and Naples was forced upon the King of Sardinia by Garibaldi, against his express command, if not against his will. There was so far a justification for the change of tone; but it was made clearly manifest that these Governments had no genuine sympathy with the Italian people in their rejection of tyrannous rulers and foreign domination. On the other hand, the conduct of the English Government (with Lord John Russell at the Foreign Office and Lord Palmerston as premier) was equally sympathetic on both occasions, affording the happiest contrast with the action of France and the Eastern Powers. As in 1858 Lord John Russell had warned the Court of Vienna that this country was wont to admit the right of a people to decide under what kind of government it would live, so in 1860 he gave evidence of undiminished goodwill towards the Italian patriots on the part of the English Ministry and people. His despatch to our representative at Turin, giving reasons why the Queen's Government could not imitate the attitude of France, Prussia, Russia, and Austria in condemning the invasion of the Papal States by Italy, is full of spirit. Its argument is based not merely upon the fundamental laws of England but also upon the irrefragable Vattel—who had declared, generations before, “that when a people, for good reasons, takes up arms against an oppressor, it is but an act of justice and generosity to assist brave men in the defence of their liberties.” *

This despatch, followed by the refusal of a French proposition that the combined fleets should prevent the landing of the Garibaldians on the mainland, virtually secured the independence of Italy. If we had made common cause with the other Powers in 1860 there can

* Appendix G.

be little doubt that the unification of the Peninsula would have been prevented; Victor Emmanuel might never have been King of Italy; the Neapolitan kingdom and the Temporal Power might have endured to the present day.

There had been no more important recognition and sanction of revolution in Europe—certainly none of equal significance and consequence. And yet the change was effected with remarkable ease. The Italians were fortunate in the opportunity of their revolt, for the selfish interests of three Great Powers were as potent in their favour as the declarations of the English Government. It is very evident that these declarations were in the highest degree serviceable to the Italians, and they mark an epoch in the development of popular and international freedom.*

The characteristic of Lord John Russell's action—and it was a personal characteristic of this Minister—

* Lord Palmerston's Administration, formed in June 1859, included the following members :—

First Lord,	Viscount Palmerston.
Lord Chancellor,	Lord Campbell.
Lord President,	Earl Granville.
Lord Privy Seal,	Duke of Argyll.
Chancellor of the Exchequer,	W. E. Gladstone.
Home Secretary,	Sir G. C. Lewis.
Foreign Secretary,	Lord John Russell.
Colonial Secretary,	Duke of Newcastle.
War Secretary,	S. Herbert.
India Secretary,	Sir C. Wood.
Chancellor of the Duchy,	Sir G. Grey.
First Lord of the Admiralty,	Duke of Somerset.
President of the Board of Trade,	T. Milner Gibson.

More than one of these, in addition to the Foreign Secretary, had given public and special indication of a spirit in sympathy with the Italian revolutionists, and adverse to the usurpation of power by Louis Napoleon.

was moral courage : courage to perform what the mind had approved, even if he were isolated in its performance, and if he were compelled to shock diplomacy and fly in the face of precedent. Does it not appear that that which we in our own day recognise as the popular and national policy, and furthermore as the official policy of England not lightly to be departed from by Ministers of any denomination, is the product of old principles and new moral courage ? There was nothing new in the principles on which Lord John Russell had acted. They were at least as old as the seventeenth century—as old as the Revolution and as Vattel. Tories and Whigs had from time to time acted in the spirit of them : the Whigs in particular had professed and maintained them. But the men who had most candidly accepted this policy, and who would most courageously have acted upon it, had been excluded from power. The people, as a people, were not able to put into practice principles which had been inculcated in them by the whole course and significance of the nation's history. They were not yet in power so far as the Parliamentary franchise was concerned ; but, on the other hand, they were powerful through public opinion, and especially through the press. And no doubt it was in reliance upon public opinion, and in the exercise of a moral courage inspired and supported by the press, that Lord John Russell was able to throw off the trammels of officialism and diplomatic restraint, and to pen the noble despatch to Sir James Hudson.

The reinvigorated policy of the English Government was continued under the influence of its Foreign Secretary, of course with the sanction of the Premier ;

and a new occasion soon arose for applying the principles of the despatch just mentioned. England was responsible in a double sense for the development of the Greek kingdom—first by her participation in the engagements of 1826-32, and secondly by the fact of her protectorate over the Ionian Islands, which had existed since 1815. The treaty which placed these islands under the protection of Great Britain referred to them as “the United States of the Ionian Islands,” and they had generally been regarded by English statesmen as a virtual republic, confided to our care in order to ensure its peace and good government. Their natural destiny, at any rate since 1832, was that they should be united with the Greek kingdom (of course in fulfilment of the wishes of the population) as soon as the Government of Athens might seem competent to undertake the charge. In the meantime we were represented at Corfu not by a Governor but by a High Commissioner, and the spirit of our arrangements with the Ionian Greeks was provisional and tentative.

Now the conditions of the problem as it came before the Palmerston Administration of 1859 were these :—The demand for union with Greece had long existed, and it was growing more and more urgent every year. Mr Gladstone’s mission to Corfu served only to define this sentiment with greater emphasis, and to draw from the inhabitants a more unequivocal demand than ever. But this was not a parallel case with that of the Italians, who had demanded absolute self-government, and proved themselves to be capable of exercising it. The Ionians required to be transferred from our Government (which was practically self-government) to the sway of a king ; and though they had urged many complaints against English rule it was certainly impossible to suppose that

government from Athens, under King Otho, would be more constitutional, or more advantageous to them in itself, than government from London. The identity of race and national interests between the Greeks of the mainland and the Greeks of the islands made the demand of the latter a reasonable one, against which it was impossible logically to contend ; but the question was complicated by the fact that the Bavarian king of Greece had notoriously proved himself to be a failure, and it could scarcely be justifiable on our part to turn over the seven islands to his tyrannous rule even at the request of a popular majority. To have done so before 1862 would have been to defeat the very objects of legitimate revolution—the chief of which is to secure a better system of government.

It was on these grounds that Mr Gladstone, and after him Sir Henry Storks, reported strongly against conceding the demands of the Ionians. It was on these grounds that Lord John Russell refused to listen to their request, and that the Queen was advised to reject their petition. But the revolution of 1862, which drove King Otho from the throne of Greece, and left the three guaranteeing Powers at liberty to provide a new monarch in his place, entirely altered the situation. From this moment the English Ministers showed themselves willing and even anxious to come to an understanding by which they might disburden themselves of an unwelcome charge. The fact is very instructive in connection with the recognised tendency of English Governments to yield timely assent to demands which have become urgent and troublesome, whenever it is apparent that they will be pressed with unwearying persistence, and that they are based on a foundation of reason. The principles on which this policy of concession rests are those which

have been observed as directing the Whig tradition for more than a century and a half, but they have come to be applied more systematically to the solution of minor questions, both in foreign and in domestic concerns. They who ask often, and forcibly, and for things to which they are theoretically entitled, are likely to secure their object from an English Whig Ministry. The constitution allows it and our Ministers award it. All that is necessary is that the demand shall be in itself equitable and logical. The rest follows from our national traditions, from our constitutional premisses and our fundamental laws. And Englishmen may be content to believe that this system of government is wise and progressive, and that the truest moral courage is displayed by statesmen who are most ready to give effect to the system. That which was recognised and sanctioned by the Administration of 1859 was the fact that the Ionians had rendered their demands irresistible by constant iteration and agitation. It was impossible for a nation like England, with a policy based and built up on justified revolution, to resist the pleading of a people which claimed to be governed by men of its own race rather than by aliens.

The only limits to ~~this~~ claim which Lord John Russell and his colleagues had been careful to impose were that the new rulers should be both entitled and able to rule. A king at Athens was certainly entitled to extend his dominion to Corfu ; and the revolution of 1862 was looked upon in London as a virtual guarantee that Otho's successor would be a stronger and more constitutional ruler than Otho. It was therefore in direct recognition of the legitimacy of the revolution that the English Cabinet determined to unite the Ionian Islands with the Greek State.

A constitutional king was found for Greece in the person of Prince William of Denmark ; and as soon as he had been elected, and had accepted the throne, the English Government invited the Great Powers to sign a treaty modifying the instrument of 1815, and releasing England from the charge confided to her. The seven islands were transferred to the kingdom of Greece under certain easy conditions ; and thus a new chapter was added to the record of England's nobler and more generous traditions.

Meanwhile a new question was arising in Europe, ominous of trouble to more than one of the Great Powers. In 1862 Prussia revived an old German claim on the southern provinces of Denmark, her Government having resolved—as it presently appeared—to pursue a policy of aggrandisement based on the principle of national re-unification. In this case also there was a question of popular demand and revolutionary agitation, a section of the inhabitants of Schleswig and Holstein having claimed to enter the German Confederation as early as 1846. The Danish king had with some difficulty made good his title, and in 1850 a treaty between Denmark and Prussia, followed by another treaty between Prussia, England, France, and Sweden, had guaranteed the integrity of Denmark as then constituted. In spite of this international agreement the Duchies themselves continued their agitation, in which they were encouraged by the Prussian Government. On the very day when Prince William was proclaimed as King George of Greece, the King of Denmark issued a proclamation formally annexing Schleswig, and including it under the new constitution which he had conferred upon his dominions, but

allowing a greater measure of independence to Holstein and Lauenburg, these provinces being admittedly associated with the German Confederation. Prussia and Austria took exception to the attitude of the king; and Holstein, relying upon German aid, refused to acknowledge the authority of the Danes. A vote of the Prussian Chambers was obtained, declaring "that the honour and interest of Germany demand that all the German States should preserve the rights of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein;" and a few weeks later the frontier was crossed by a vanguard of Saxon and Hanoverian troops.

In these circumstances Denmark accepted the mediation of England, and on the last day of 1863 Lord Russell despatched a note to the German Federal Diet, in which in the interests of peace he required that a Conference of the Powers which had signed the recent treaty, together with a representative of the Confederation, should meet in Paris or London to settle the differences between Germany and Denmark, and that in the meantime the *status quo* should be maintained. The mediation was declined by the German States, and three weeks later an army of Prussians and Austrians entered Holstein.

It must be allowed that Earl Russell was justified in tendering the mediation of England. The treaty of 1850 directly authorized, if it did not compel him to take such a step. The question mainly debated at the time was whether we were not bound to go much farther, and intervene with material aid to the nation whose integrity we had guaranteed. But the situation was very complicated and difficult. We had had little inducement to take part in the guarantee of 1850, and it might have been wiser to abstain from that act; but we had then simply set our hand to an instrument to which the

German Powers were the principal parties. We had signed after Prussia and Austria; now Prussia and Austria were attacking Denmark. We had signed with Republican France and Sweden; now France was Imperial, and Sweden, apart from the other Powers, was of no practical account.

There were thus three sides to the question. The Ministerialists urged that, being in fact signatories of the treaty of 1850, we were at least called upon to offer our mediation, but that when this mediation was declined, taking all the circumstances into account, we could not be considered as bound to go to war for Denmark against our fellow-guarantors. The Tory Opposition, if they did not precisely maintain that we were so bound, twitted the Government with having first lectured and then retreated. The advocates of a domestic, non-interfering, precautionary, and peaceful policy contended that we had been rash in giving the original guarantee, and that we should be infinitely more rash in taking any steps which might commit us to a war for such inadequate cause. The policy of the Government was a mean between two extremes; and, even if one of these extremes was the best course to pursue, it is hard to see how Earl Russell and his colleagues could either have withheld the offer of mediation or have gone beyond it when it was rejected.

Lord Derby, criticising the conduct of our foreign affairs at this time, affirmed that Lord Russell's policy might be summed up in two words—meddle and muddle. "During the whole course of his diplomatic correspondence, wherever he has interfered—and he has interfered everywhere—he has been lecturing, scolding, blustering, and retreating. . . . Thanks to the noble earl and the present Government, we have at this moment not one

single friend in Europe ; and more than that, this country, the chief fault of which was that it went too direct and straightforward at what it aimed, which never gave a promise without the intention of performing, which never threatened without a full determination of striking, which never made a demand without being prepared to enforce it—this country is now in such a position that its menaces are disregarded, its magniloquent language is ridiculed, and its remonstrances are treated with contemptuous indifference.”

This was anything but a just view to take of Lord Russell's conduct in the Italian, Greek, and Danish questions ; for in the first case, in so far as he may have lectured he certainly stood to his words, and made good his promises to the Italian people, whilst in the other two cases he appears to have acted in the wisest manner that circumstances would allow. No doubt there was indignation and irritation in England on the subject of the German attack on Denmark ; but Englishmen would assuredly not have thanked Lord Russell for plunging them into war on that account. Nevertheless the Government had gone so far as to remonstrate with Prussia and Austria for their breach of the guarantee of 1850.

There was another and a more important question which came to the front about the same time, in regard to which Lord Russell's action was more open to criticism ; though on the whole he deserved well of his countrymen in this case also. The civil war in America was exceedingly embarrassing for England. The Southern States had many friends on this side of the Atlantic ; they were numerous and powerful ; for a long period it seemed

probable that they would prevail in arms against the North ; and (perhaps the most potent consideration of all) they furnished the bulk of the raw material for one of our staple industries. The recognition of their belligerent rights was demanded by popular opinion, and by a majority in Parliament ; and Lord Palmerston's Cabinet could not well avoid the proclamation of absolute neutrality between the two contending parties. They might have obtained the sanction of a majority for yet more friendly recognition of the Confederate States ; and it is certainly to their credit that they resisted the pressure put upon them. Lord Russell has taken upon himself the blame of permitting the escape of the *Alabama* from Birkenhead, as also the responsibility for detaining the *Alexandra* and other vessels. He would have shown wisdom and prudence if he had from the beginning perceived the true significance of the American war—had seen on which side the best interests of England were involved, and had done what his position enabled him to lead the sympathies of Englishmen into accord with their better traditions.

The prescience of Mr Bright on this occasion is as notable as it had been in the case of the Crimean War, and the moral courage with which he formed and expressed his conclusions was all the more remarkable because a short-sighted manufacturer in his place would have seen nothing but the impending ruin of his trade. A passage in one of his speeches presents him in a curious light as justifying a resort to arms ; and the argument is worth citing because it shows how far a leader of what is known as the Peace Party may go, in an extreme case, towards an admission of satisfaction at the existence of a state of war. " Looking," Mr Bright said at Rochdale, in the winter of 1861, " at the principles avowed

in England, and at its policy, there is no man, who is not absolutely a non-resistant in every sense, who can fairly challenge the conduct of the American Government in this war. It would be a curious thing to find that the party in this country which on every public question affecting England is in favour of war at any cost, when they come to speak of the duty of the Government of the United States is in favour of 'peace at any price.' I want to know whether it has ever been admitted by politicians, or statesmen, or people, that a great nation can be broken up at any time by any particular section of any part of that nation." Whether the South succeeded in its attempt or not, Mr Bright declared his belief that, in a few years, "the twenty millions of free men in the North will be thirty millions, or even fifty millions—a population equal to or exceeding that of this kingdom. When that time comes, I pray that it may not be said amongst them that, in the darkest hour of their country's trials, England, the land of their fathers, looked on with icy coldness, and saw unmoved the perils and calamities of their children. As for me, I have but this to say: I am but one in this audience, and but one in the citizenship of this country; but if all other tongues are silent, mine shall speak for that policy which gives hope to the bondsmen of the South, and which tends to generous thoughts, and generous words, and generous deeds, between the two great nations who speak the English language, and from their origin are alike entitled to the English name."

Remarkably as Mr Bright's predictions have been fulfilled by the after history of the United States, and by the relations which have been established between the two countries, they were for the most part scouted at the time when they were uttered; and Lord Russell was at

one with his colleagues, and with nearly all the prominent politicians on both sides, in believing that the secession of the Southern States would be carried into effect. There can be little question in our own day as to the merits of the case, whether from a practical or from a moral point of view ; but a Ministry is obliged to shape its course more or less according to the popular opinion of the time, and popular opinion in this instance began by favouring the South rather than the North. The struggle was regarded by many as one quite distinct from the issues of slavery and abolition, though to be sure it could not be kept distinct from these issues. It was considered in the light of a struggle for independence on the part of some millions of industrious people, claiming the right of self-government, which England has always maintained to be due to those who are prepared to fight for it.

With these conflicting opinions to take into account, perhaps no other statesman in Lord Russell's place could have contrived any better to satisfy the wishes of the nation in regard to the treatment of the belligerents. A critic of the quality of Mr Grote described the "perfect neutrality" of England as "almost a phenomenon in political history," and declared that no such forbearance had been shown for two centuries past. "It is the single case in which the English Government and public, generally so over-meddlesome, have displayed some prudent and commendable forbearance." And Mr Grote censured very warmly the manner in which the Northern States had requited this forbearance. No doubt it was a happy thing that England should have kept herself clear of the complications which more than once threatened to drag her into the American Civil War. But the Federals, whatever their conduct towards England may

have been, can scarcely be accused of ingratitude. There was no demand upon their gratitude in the fact that we did not help the planters to cast off their allegiance. It was no credit to us that we abstained from what would have been a lunatic war. On the other hand, the bitter tone of English society against the cause of the North, and the strange unwillingness of English politicians and newspapers to recognise the true aspects of the case, fully explained the animosity of the Northerners, and went far to account for the demand made upon us in respect of the escaped privateers. At any rate the Washington Government was justified by events in the position which it took up, and in its interpretation of international law.

Though our abstinence from war on this occasion was not so phenomenal as Grote conceived it to be, yet no doubt the bearing of our Ministers between 1862 and 1866 was in the main judicious and satisfactory. The nation saw with relief that its Ministers were no longer disposed to seize hastily upon a pretext for war, even when they might count on a parliamentary majority. It would have been easy for Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell, by acts which would certainly have been condoned, to take the part of the Southern States in 1862, or 1863, and thus to plunge the country into a desperate and costly struggle. That they did not do so was apparently due to the coolness and judgment of Lord Russell in particular. His great mistake in connection with the American Civil War was in permitting the departure of the *Alabama* from Birkenhead. He had received the opinion of Sir R. Collier to the effect that the equipment of the vessel in an English port was a breach of international law ; but he delayed action for four days, awaiting the opinions of the law officers of the

Crown, and in the interval the *Alabama* set sail. Save in this dereliction he did nothing which committed England to a quarrel with the Northern States ; and it is only fair to his memory that we should suppose him to have been actuated by a conviction that a larger portion of the community than the classes then enfranchised ought to be consulted before the nation engaged in a new war.

Lord Russell had never concealed his belief that the Reform Act of 1832 was inadequate to the necessities of the case. He was one of the first, in the leading rank of politicians, to advise a supplementary extension of the franchise ; and it was only the strong objection of Lord Palmerston in his later years which prevented his colleagues from taking a new departure. When Lord Russell once more assumed the premiership in 1865 he lost no time in proposing to his Cabinet that the superior classes of working-men should be forthwith admitted to the franchise ; and the delay which occurred between 1865 and 1867 was due simply to the practical and personal difficulties of legislation. The new initiation of the movement was practically the work of Lord Russell, who thus placed on record his conviction that the working-classes were now entitled to the same consideration which had been given to the claims of the middle classes just a third of a century before.

The country owes him a debt of recognition on this account ; and the fact should be the more scrupulously admitted and remembered because he was the leader of the Whig party, and not in any sense a democrat. The new order of things in England must depend mainly on the strength and judgment of democratic leaders. Lord Russell was an aristocratic Whig, with all the traditions and most of the prejudices of his order and party ;

and yet he perceived beforehand the justice of the principles on which the case of the English democracy rests. Not merely by his introduction of a Reform Bill in 1866, but also by the general tone of his foreign policy, he acknowledged the right of the whole community to rule itself, and to guide its destinies at home and abroad.

No doubt the new departure was really taken in 1867, in an Act which, though passed by a Tory Government, went far beyond what Lord Russell had contemplated a year previously. But in spite of this, and in spite of the fact that Lord Russell somewhat sharply criticised the policy of Mr Gladstone's first Administration, it must be allowed to the credit of the Whigs that their leader had responded to popular aspirations, and had entered upon the right path before the actual transfer of the casting vote from the middle to the working classes.

VIII.

DEVELOPMENTS.

(1868-74.)

LOOKING back from the standpoint of to-day on the whole course of our policy towards other States, not merely in the present century but from the Revolution of 1688, we cannot fail to be struck by a fact as remarkable in itself as it is satisfactory for the people of this country. Whenever the national policy of England has been in question, and an issue has been raised in which the popular weal and wish have been largely concerned, the action of the two great political parties has been distinctly and, as a rule, instantly affected by public opinion. There has forthwith, on the part of the leaders on both sides, been a virtual bidding for the favour and support of the nation—not of necessity an unscrupulous or unseemly bidding, but conspicuous and confessed.

It was natural, after the Revolution, that our statesmen should recognise more clearly than before that the ultimate source of power and authority was in the voice of the masses, and not merely in the voice of the electorate but in the numerical force which practically makes the strength of revolutions. It was chiefly the Whigs who saw and acted on this truth for more than half a century after the Bill of Rights had sealed the contract between the Crown and the people. The Tories looked back, and hankered after the old order of things, until

the last Pretender had proved the futility of further resistance. But in the latter part of the eighteenth century there was a notable development of opinion amongst the Tories. Having once accepted what they could not fail to admit was a revolutionary constitution for England, they also accepted the logical conclusion already arrived at by their political rivals. They saw the necessity of bowing sooner or later to public opinion; they felt the increasing power of this opinion, and of the masses amongst whom it was generated; and they perceived that the truest wisdom of a statesman—best for the masses, for the country through the masses, and for themselves through both—was to meet popular demands as they arose, perhaps to postpone them if they could, certainly to manipulate them as well as they could, but at any rate to grant them in the end.

When the younger Pitt took office (not to go more deeply into the subject) he was inoculated with this idea; and at the same time he found the expression of public opinion, in books, pamphlets, and the newspapers of the day, more vigorous than it had ever been before. The periodical press rapidly gained strength in the decade preceding the French Revolution, and it was only the cataclysm of 1792 which prevented its steady progress. On this basis of opinion and popular disposition Pitt began life as a reformer, and for some time struggled manfully against the cry for war with France, as though he foresaw that his career was about to be shaped for him after a model which he would never have selected on his own account. Canning caught the lamp from the dying hands of Pitt, and he too was a Tory imbued with the spirit of popular progress, though his individual tendencies led him in a different direction from that which the great war Minister had originally taken.

Canning's friends and disciples continued this particular line of Tory tradition—Huskisson towards Free Trade, Palmerston towards a foreign policy which was as characteristically English and spirited as that of his master, though somewhat less generous and more exclusively insular. Peel, whatever his want of personal sympathy with Canning, was like-minded with him in several important respects; and so it was with one or two of the more distinguished Tory members of his Cabinet.

The policy of these statesmen was not rightly described as a policy of "Tory men and Whig measures." Their measures were not Whig. They were national and popular. They were measures in harmony with the English constitution, and were therefore in some sense revolutionary. From the point of view of an old Tory, who happened to have been brought up with a high degree of respect for the divine right of kings and the feudal privileges of the aristocracy, they were revolutionary without any reservation, and full of peril to at least two estates of the realm. Thus it was that the Tories abovenamed, from Pitt to Peel, found their most bitter enemies amongst their own denomination; and in some noteworthy instances they divided their party as thoroughly as the Whigs have divided their followers by marking out the limits of popular concession. But it is nevertheless true that no great Tory leader for sixty years past—and with one brief interval of exception no great Tory leader since the days of Bolingbroke—has found government practicable in England without stooping or rising to the revolutionary method.

The last conspicuous example was afforded by Lord Beaconsfield, who made the concession of political principles a fine art in 1867, and a few years later throned the paradox of democratic imperialism.

The lesson which remains to be drawn from these facts is that popular progress in England, and the advance of the nation towards the definitive establishment of its popular and logical policy, are due almost as much to Tories as to Whigs. Not to the Tory party; because the statesmen who reversed the continental policy of Castlereagh, who sealed the liberties of America, Portugal, Greece, who emancipated the Roman Catholics, who gave us Free Trade, and who enfranchised the working classes, relied in every case upon Liberal assistance, and virtually withstood and affronted their party in obeying their convictions. Most of them, moreover, ceased to be Tory when they became revolutionary. It is in the record of only one amongst them all—perhaps the greatest genius, certainly the most ingenious politician—that he contrived to lead an active and united Tory party after he had carried a Radical measure by the aid of a Whig alliance.

The Reform Act of 1867 gave the casting vote in English politics to the working classes, and thus potentially placed in the people's hands the influence, authority, and self-control, for which it had been constantly and persistently striving. Our children will be in a position to realise the great results which must flow from the virtual creation of the democracy in 1867. We ourselves may live long enough to see what the people of this country will be able to effect by means of the lever which has been given to them. It is related of Mr Bright that when Cobden suggested to him, on the morrow of their Free Trade victory, a new agitation in the interest of national retrenchment, he preferred to work in the first place for an extension of the franchise, believing that the

people would know how to retrench, as well as to secure their other cherished aims, when once they had been made arbiters of their own fate. It may already be said that Mr Bright's prescience has been justified. The people indeed are not yet emancipated in the sense of being fully represented in Parliament. There are categories still to be included in the franchise, and there are amendments of the representative system which men of all parties agree to be necessary. And again it is true that the classes emancipated in 1867 do not seem to have used their power consistently, as though they were conscious of its value, or were resolved to assert their strength. But the general course of events since the passing of the Reform Act tends to show that the democratic factors of the State are henceforth those which must count the most in any estimate of the various forces of the community, and that organization alone is needed to make the people as a people—not "king, lords, and commons," nor privileged classes acting on behalf of the whole nation, but the commonwealth of England—what it has never yet been, from year to year master in its own house.

It must be concluded that the general election of 1868, the first in which the newly enfranchised householders were called upon to exercise their rights, was decided, or at any rate made emphatic, by the vote of the democracy. Mr Gladstone apparently understood it in this sense when he offered Mr Bright one of the most important seats in his Cabinet, and when he drew up a programme of reforms which he could not have proposed to a purely Whig Ministry. The people at large understood it in this sense when they acclaimed a policy including the aims of nonconformists and liberationists, of radical land-law reformers and the advocates of compul-

sory secular education. And the correctness of this view was confirmed a few years later, when the Government began to lose its hold upon the country because it lost the support of leading Radicals and Nonconformists. The Liberal union was breached in more than one or two places ; and though an attempt was made to heal the breaches by bringing Mr Bright again into the Cabinet, it was manifestly owing to the discouragement of the democratic sections that Mr Gladstone's Government fell in 1874.

Several notable questions of foreign policy occurred during this Administration, and on three or four of these it is worth while to touch. The dispute with the United States in reference to our breach of neutrality came to a head whilst Lord Granville was at the Foreign Office, and it was settled by the conclusion of the Treaty of Washington and the Geneva Arbitration. The national view taken of this dispute seems to have been that it had existed too long, that its protraction, with the consequent animosity between the two countries, was a discredit to our statesmanship, and that, since the quarrel had been allowed to attain exaggerated proportions, it would be better to make concessions beyond what we might think just, in order to bring the difficulty to a solution. In this spirit the nation acquiesced in the Treaty, and in the award of the arbitrators ; but a great soreness remained in the minds of many Englishmen, even after they perceived the happy result of the arbitration in wiping out the old animosities.

Perhaps no one now regrets that we went to Geneva, and loyally paid the heavy fine in which we were amerced. The Tories must share with the Whigs the responsibility for keeping the quarrel open so long after the offence was committed. That there had been an

offence on our part was not denied. No one acknowledged it more freely than Lord Russell, who was Foreign Minister when the predatory vessels were allowed to escape from England. The question is whether we could not have emerged from our difficulty with less delay and at a less cost—whether, in fact, we should not have made amends in a frank and honourable spirit as soon as the Washington Government brought its complaint to our notice.

Lord Russell, in one of the last of his published writings, contends that Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville went too far in their compliance with American demands, presenting their case to the court of Geneva in terms which made an unfavourable verdict certain beforehand, and needlessly giving to their concession the appearance of an act of submission and deference. He suggests arguments which Lord Granville might have used to show that the dereliction of duty on the part of England was not so great as the Americans made out; but in point of fact the gist of the difficulty as it came before Mr Gladstone's Government was that argument had already been exhausted, and that the quarrel, then six years old, had passed from the phase of candour to the phase of bitterness and exasperation. Lord Russell had done his part towards this deterioration of the diplomatic incident. He had shown fight over the question, conscientiously enough, no doubt; but the Washington Government had been as obstinate in demanding too much as he had been obstinate in offering too little. As early as 1865 the United States proposed an arbitration on the several matters in dispute between the two countries, which Lord Russell refused. It stands to Lord Beaconsfield's credit that he accepted the same offer (under somewhat more satisfactory conditions) when made by Mr Reverdy

Johnson in 1868 ; and this time it was the American Government which prevented an accommodation. When Mr Gladstone took office he found the whole question involved in confusion and difficulty, and the steps which he took must be judged in the light of the fact that he had to arrange the quarrels of other people, and not his own.

That which he actually did was to consent to the sitting of a High Joint Commission, to the signature of the Treaty of Washington, and to the decision of the Court of Arbitration. In all these cases the English Government was represented just as fully as the American Government, by her best statesmen and lawyers ; and this is all that an arbitration can ever guarantee beforehand. If there is any value whatever in the method of arbitration, Mr Gladstone's Government took the proper measures to secure it. It was clearly not in their power to command success ; and there is no sufficient reason for stigmatising their conduct as either submissive or deferential to the United States. A frank reference of disputed points to the judgment of a third party must always be open to a reproach of weakness from the mouth of those whose favourite method is pugnacity. But pugnacity was not the favourite method of Lord Russell, and the reproach came amiss from his lips. In this question of the *Alabama* and kindred claims he showed less of that moral courage which had heretofore been manifested in his character, whilst the high moral courage of Mr Gladstone and his colleagues was one of their distinguishing features.

Though there was not wanting amongst Englishmen a sense of mortification at the award of the Geneva court, and though the idea prevailed that we had, in the interest of peace, strained a point or two against ourselves in the

Treaty of Washington, the settlement was received with pleasure by the nation as a whole, and the three millions and a quarter which we had to pay sat lightly on the conscience of the majority. The sum was so trifling in comparison with the cost of a war, and the effect of the judgment was so beneficial in bringing England and the United States together again, that all unprejudiced minds accepted the solution without demur ; whilst the advocates of arbitration as a formal method for the settlement of international quarrels were notably encouraged. A remarkable illustration of the influence which this incident had exercised amongst English politicians was afforded in the session of 1873, when Mr Henry Richard actually succeeded in carrying a resolution in favour of establishing "a general and permanent system of international arbitration."

But the time was not yet ripe. The principle was accepted ; the practice was initiated ; but it is necessary that the nation should speak more imperatively than it has ever yet done before an English Government can stand officially committed to a policy of formal arbitration.

A case of considerable delicacy arose in connection with the independence of Belgium, which appeared to be menaced on the outbreak of hostilities between the French and Germans in the summer of 1870. Belgium was guaranteed by the Powers in 1832, when Prince Leopold was set upon the throne, and successive English Governments had always attached great importance to this guarantee. It was alleged that a war could not proceed between two such Powers as France and Germany without jeopardy to the position of Belgium, which lay

between the combatants, and which naturally offered a great temptation to each of them. Public opinion in England was much moved by the war, and by the possibility that a violation of Belgian territory might render it necessary to intervene. That there was some ground for this alarm was proved by the fact that the absorption of Belgium by France, as part of a compact between her and her rival, had actually been proposed by the Emperor's Government a few years before.

In these circumstances the English Cabinet had no choice but to take steps for the assurance of the safety of Belgium. Lord Granville demanded at Paris and Berlin a pledge that the combatants would respect the neutrality of the country; and after the war had broken out he exacted their participation in a treaty by which England bound herself, in case of an infraction of the guarantee by either side, to co-operate with the other in defending the neutral territory. This course, absolutely imposed upon Mr Gladstone's Government, would doubtless have sufficed for all practical purposes; but the popular feeling and the excitement of the two Houses of Parliament compelled them to do still more. Something like a panic had taken possession of the country; and on the eve of the prorogation Mr Cardwell asked for a supplementary vote of two millions sterling, in order to maintain an additional force of twenty thousand men during the continuance of the war.

In the Upper House Lord Russell gave evidence of the broad distinction which he drew between the case of Belgium in 1870 and the case of Denmark in 1863 by bringing forward a bill for the calling out of the militia; but he did not persist in this attempt to supplement the efforts of the Government. On the other hand there were some who condemned the supplementary vote as

useless, and lamented that a Liberal Cabinet, presided over by Mr Gladstone and including Mr Bright, should have succumbed to a panic, and hastened to prepare for war. Replying in the Commons to such arguments as these, the Prime Minister claimed that the attitude of his Government was wise as well as spirited—that, whilst they had no option but to defend the integrity of Belgium, the neutrality of England was distinctly peaceful in its character.

As it turned out, the two millions might well have been saved ; and it does not appear that any sufficient cause existed (beyond the demand of public opinion as then interpreted) for the raising of the additional troops. It was contended that the preparation of these troops was a natural sequel to the conclusion of the treaty with France and Prussia, and that having undertaken on emergency to co-operate with one of these Powers against the other we were bound to hold ourselves in readiness for such an emergency. The pretext is a doubtful one. The Treaty was surely ample in itself. That instrument once signed, a deliberate violation of Belgian neutrality was in the last degree improbable ; but even if it had occurred our peace establishment (which had been raised in two years from 106,500 to 130,000, reserves included) was quite strong enough for the demonstration which would have been necessary, or for the first step in a more formidable intervention. This at any rate is the view which was taken by men who had kept themselves free from panic, and who felt confidence in the discretion of the combatants and the strength of England's position. But it was not the prevailing view at the moment ; and it seems to have been practically impossible for the Government to take a different course from that which was dictated to them.

The "secure" neutrality of England, as Mr Gladstone called it, was studiously and carefully maintained; and we can look back with entire satisfaction on the general attitude of the Government to both parties in this memorable contest. When the German ambassador in London, with somewhat overweening assumption, invited this country to prohibit the export of war materials to France—and when even some Englishmen were disposed to think that the exporters of arms were bringing us into another difficulty of the *Alabama* kind—Lord Granville replied to Count Bernstorff in dignified and almost improving terms. When it had been impossible to foresee how the fortune of war would turn, he reminded the Count, we were scrupulous in following the dictates of practice and precedent. Since then France, notwithstanding her courage and gallantry, had suffered unbroken reverses, whilst Germany had given extraordinary proofs of her skill and strength. "Your Excellency," Lord Granville concluded, "as the representative of a great and chivalrous nation, must agree with me that it would not be possible that we should now change the policy which we declared to our Parliament to be usual, just, and expedient, because it was stated by the victorious belligerent to be in some degree favourable to the defeated enemy."

This is in the very best style of English diplomatic language, and displays a spirit which Englishmen will never, under any modification of their foreign policy, regret to witness in the conduct of their Ministers.

At the moment when the indemnity was being paid to America in accordance with the award of Geneva, and when for various reasons the popularity of Mr Glad-

tone's Government was rapidly on the wane, in the summer of 1873, a petty war was undertaken by us against the Ashantee tribes of Western Africa. In its cause, its inception, its prosecution, in the disproportion of its cost to the value of the objects attained, it had many points of resemblance with the Abyssinian war in 1867; and however much these two expeditions may seem to have been justified at the time, there is probably in our own day a pretty general opinion that the country paid too dearly on both occasions for what it gained. In a sense, no doubt, the wars were necessary and inevitable. At any rate the question as to their necessity was for the men of 1867 and 1873 rather than for ourselves. Short as the time is—reckoning by years—since Sir Robert Napier and Sir Garnet Wolseley were employed in reducing King Theodore and King Coffee to submission, it would be unfair to judge the Governments of Lord Derby and Mr Gladstone by the public opinion which exists in the ninth decade of the century. All that we can justly do is to examine the reasons alleged by the advocates of those costly expeditions, and to indicate the arguments which might induce us, in similar circumstances, to follow a different course.

The Abyssinian war was undertaken solely in order to release a few English prisoners, truculently held in durance (though not otherwise ill-treated) by an overweening savage. The difficulty thus created for us was by no means easy to deal with. The Government of the day were urged to stretch out the long arm of England on behalf of these captives, first by the captives themselves and their friends, next by public writers and speakers who never counted the cost of the operation in money and lives, and again by those who had some idea of the cost, but who held that the dignity and reputa-

tion of England demanded the effort, apart from any consideration of the prisoners. The reason which was looked upon as most cogent in 1867 was the last of the three. It was the vindication of English honour, rather than the liberation of these particular men, which led to the despatch of the expedition ; but it may be questioned whether the other reasons are not really more potent in their character. The inducement of humanity, magnified and exaggerated by a popular enthusiasm, might have sufficient force even in our own time to involve the country in war, because it would overbear the calmer dictates of reason, and defeat the counsels of prudence and patient strategy. But a question as to the dignity and honour of the nation may be more coolly discussed and analysed. Here also the heads of the counsellors may prove to be weaker than the hearts, or the imaginations, of the people ; but there is more scope for rational procedure. Many a man who would give his vote for war at the thought of a single English captive languishing in the power of a barbarian would take ample time to consider the limitations of national dignity, and would listen with deliberate attention to all that could be said on the matter.

Englishmen are beginning to think, or are thinking with more of conviction year after year, that the honour and repute of the country throughout the world depend less on its acknowledged pugnacity than has generally been supposed. Of course so long as war is the chief, not to say the only arbitrament amongst nations, it must command the respect of civilised Powers and ignorant races to know that we are ready to fight over the least discredit done to an English citizen. No statesman ever laid greater stress on this notion than Lord Palmerston, who boasted that the whole offensive strength of the

country was at the back of every man who set his foot in a foreign land. His combative assertion of England's dignity, which made him so popular at home and so greatly disliked abroad, has scarcely yet ceased to be regarded with admiration by large classes of his countrymen; and it was certainly a powerful memory and example in 1867, even to men of the opposite school of politics. But the present generation appears to doubt both the dignity and the efficacy of such a policy. It is very dubious indeed whether we shall ever again consent to embark on a war like the one in Abyssinia for the purpose of convincing savage nations of our ability to crush them, whatever we may do for the release of captive travellers and missionaries.

The Ashantee expedition was perhaps less justifiable than the march upon Magdala. A quarrel had arisen between the subjects of King Coffee and the tribe of the Fantees, who were (or were considered to be) friendly to the English. The inhabitants of Elmina having given asylum to a number of Ashantee troops, this town was reduced to ashes by marines and seamen from several of our ships lying off the coast. With more or less of reason the English merchants then conceived themselves to be in danger; Cape Coast Castle was said to be threatened by an army of thirty thousand Ashantees; something like a panic ensued, in Africa and at home; Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent out with a large force; and the whole coast was blockaded from Cape Coast to the river Assinee.

Now it was manifest, as the commander of the expedition declared to the native chiefs as soon as he reached the Gold Coast, that this was "not an English war but a Fantee war." The English forts were so strong that we ourselves had nothing to fear from the Ashantees;

but as it had become evident that a merely defensive war would result in the destruction of the Fantees we had decided to help them. These are Sir Garnet Wolseley's own words ; and they were not mere words of policy. They expressed the truth, and that truth undoubtedly condemns the expedition as either useless or disproportionate to the end in view. It was not clear that we had any reason to dread an attack by the Ashantees on Englishmen. It was not clear that our sailors had any right to burn Elmina. But to us it seems abundantly clear that the despatch of another man-of-war in place of Sir Garnet Wolseley and his expedition would have done all that was necessary in the way of repelling the assaults of King Coffee, or teaching him a lesson which he would not be likely to forget.

The policy of the Government in 1873 was sharply criticised, by their natural friends as well as by their natural enemies. Earl Grey wrote one of his studied letters to the *Times*, in which he pointed out how the costly expedition might in his opinion have been avoided. Lord Salisbury, carping at the heroic measures of the Cabinet so far as the Home Office was concerned, suggested that Ministers did not allow their heroism to cross the threshold of the Foreign Office. "They offer us," he said, "a remarkable instance of Christian meekness and humility ; but I am afraid it is that kind of Christian meekness which turns the left cheek to Russia and America, and demands the uttermost farthing of Ashantee."

Banter of this kind, and phrases like the "plundering and blundering" of Lord Beaconsfield's electioneering

letter to Lord Grey de Wilton, were freely pelted at the Government. The reproaches passed current at the time—chiefly, perhaps, because the Ministerialists themselves were discouraged and disorganized by their domestic troubles, by the grave discontent of Nonconformists, friends of the Established Churches, publicans, and “harassed interests” of various kinds. There was no evidence at the general election of 1874 that the country had been moved to indignation by Mr Gladstone’s and Lord Granville’s foreign policy. Of course Opposition speakers and writers had inveighed against the Geneva settlement, and against the tameness of the Cabinet in permitting Russia to repudiate the Treaty of Paris, and to occupy Khiva in spite of a formal promise on the part of the Czar. But it does not appear that the condemnation of Mr Gladstone’s first Ministry by the constituencies was attributable to his policy on these and other questions of international concern. There is, on the contrary, fair reason to conclude that the voters with whom the balance of power actually rested, and many of whom abstained in 1874 from exercising their right, would willingly have retained Mr Gladstone’s services if the issue had been confined to foreign affairs.

The turning of the left cheek to Russia, which Lord Salisbury’s scriptural rhetoric contrasted with our exacting conduct in Ashantee, was undoubtedly a sore annoyance for the large number of Englishmen who had by this time definitively accepted the Czar as their “natural enemy.” When in the year 1870 the Government of St Petersburg, taking advantage of the Franco-German war, formally declared to the Powers that it no longer regarded itself as bound by the clauses of the Treaty of Paris relating to the Black Sea, the English Cabinet

was placed in a condition of the utmost difficulty and delicacy. It was called upon at a few days' notice to decide a question which manifestly involved some of the main traditions and problems of English policy. It was clear enough that Russia's action, if the veto of her co-signatories were not placed upon it, would practically set her free from the general limitations of the Treaty ; and there was ample cause to suspect that her self-assertion at this moment was a sign of renewed activity which might forebode no little perplexity for England in the immediate future. If the Czar were in reality our natural enemy, and if it behoved us on that account to take measures of defence and precaution, then no doubt it was incumbent upon Mr Gladstone's Cabinet to strain every nerve in order to hold Russia to her plighted word.

This question was duly considered by the Cabinet ; but it was apparent to all men from the beginning that the issue was one of might rather than of right. Unless we were prepared to go to war with Russia single-handed, there was no course open to us except to assent with as good a grace as possible. An Anglo-Russian war, entered upon at the crisis of the Franco-German war, would have implied nothing short of a continent in arms, for it would not have been in the nature of things that Austria and Italy should in these circumstances have remained at peace. Clearly the English Government could not lightly undertake the responsibility of plunging Europe into such a vortex of war. The most weighty and inexpugnable reasons would be necessary to justify them in a resolution of this kind ; and the reasons which were urged upon them by irresponsible advisers did not commend themselves to Mr Gladstone and his colleagues as sufficiently strong.

The contention was that England alone should insist at all hazards on the withdrawal of Russia's pretensions. But England had been one of seven co-signatories of the Treaty of Paris; her responsibility was shared with the other six; her duty was limited in the same manner; and her interest in the particular question raised by Russia was certainly not so paramount as to make her set these limitations entirely out of account. The position which Mr Gladstone's Cabinet took up was the cautious, the straightforward, and the wise one. They protested against the violation by Russia of a solemn Treaty. An active interchange of notes took place between Lord Granville and Prince Gortchakoff.* For some weeks the controversy was full of peril, though not of bitterness; but in the end our Cabinet accepted the suggestion of Count Bismarck to refer the Russian Circular to the representatives of the Powers in London.

It is impossible to maintain that Mr Gladstone or Lord Granville could have done more in the circumstances, even if to have done more would have been desirable. Russia had alleged that the recent changes in Europe had disturbed the balance of power to her detriment, and that the Treaty must on this account be construed in an altered sense. Germany so far agreed with Russia as to employ a mediating influence. France could not move. Austria and Italy were decidedly unwilling to move. There was plainly no alternative for England but to fall in with the judgment (or the predicament) of her allies.

Thus it happened that the tradition of English policy in Eastern Europe, which Lord Palmerston had done so much to strengthen, and which had appeared to be consecrated and perpetuated by the Crimean War, was

* Appendix H.

modified in 1870 almost against our will. It is certain that Mr Gladstone's Cabinet—then at the height of its authority and power—did not readily depart from the tradition in question. When the secret history of the time comes to be written it will perhaps be shown that no Minister in 1870 was more staunch, or more disposed to insist on every letter of the Treaty of Paris, than the one who six years later deliberately came to the conclusion that a tradition involving the "natural friendship" of Turkey must at any rate be modified so far as that element was concerned.

The critics of the Government were quite right in one sense. A new departure in the Eastern Question was taken in 1870; and virtually also a new departure in England's policy. It was very manifest that we were no longer to be led blindly by our "natural" hostilities. Reason, and above all moral courage, were henceforth to be called more and more into play. Few Englishmen would have believed, at the moment when Prince Gortchakoff's circular was made public, that this country could possibly emerge without fighting from a series of international incidents such as those which distinguished the succeeding decade.

Little more than two years after this repudiation of the Treaty of Paris another incident occurred which raised bad blood between England and Russia, and which was made an occasion of reproach against Mr Gladstone's Cabinet. In the first month of 1873 a report reached this country that the Government of the Czar had decided upon an expedition to Khiva; and the news created no little sensation amongst those who saw a danger for England in the advance of the Russians in

Asia. The line of this advance was in the direction of India, and the Russophobes had been persistently urging that our great dependency in the East was the real objective of the encroaching Muscovites. The Liberal Government itself was startled and alarmed by this new move, and a lively interchange of notes between London and St Petersburg at once ensued. In the course of this correspondence the Czar sent a special message to the English Cabinet, by the hand of Count Schouvaloff, to the effect that the expedition, which was not to consist of more than four and a half battalions, had received distinct orders not to take possession of Khiva—that its object was simply to release fifty Russian prisoners, and to teach the Khan a lesson. The pledge was accepted by our Government as satisfactory ; the relations of the two countries were established on excellent terms ; and the old animosity was to some extent cleared away by the arrangement of a marriage between the Duke of Edinburgh and the Grand Duchess Marie.

In June of the same year General Kauffmann entered Khiva, and three months later he signed a treaty with the ruler of Bokhara, whereby the occupied territory on the right bank of the Amou Darya was formally annexed by Russia. The town of Khiva itself was left out of this arrangement, but the Russian troops continued to hold the town. As Mr Gladstone's Administration came to an end in the beginning of 1874 it can scarcely be blamed for not having exacted the observance by Russia of the promise of the Czar. The promise in question had not excluded the possibility of a temporary occupation ; and, though its spirit was clearly violated by the annexation of the territory mentioned in General Kauffmann's treaty, it was impossible for England imperatively to demand the evacuation of Khiva within six months

of its capture.* They who made it a test of statesmanship that a high tone should be adopted with the Government of St Petersburg were bound in candour to admit that Lord Granville had used successful diplomacy in eliciting the assurances of the Czar. If it was incumbent on us to hold Russia to this pledge, the task fell naturally to the Government which assumed office in 1874.

The policy of England between 1869 and 1873 was on the whole national, honourable, and successful. We had not bullied and we had not cringed. Our system was certainly not continental, though there is a sense in which it may be said to have been cosmopolitan. We yielded to the United States in 1872—but it had been right to yield. We yielded to Russia in 1870—but every other Power had yielded, we had no real option in the matter, and, even if we had been in a position to choose, there were very many who thought that in this case also it was right to yield. Concession is no crime in the eyes of candid men; whilst in every question of right and wrong, where a course that is honourable stands opposed to a course that is merely overbearing and selfish, concession is most indisputably a virtue. And not a virtue only; but when the disadvantage of yielding amounts to nothing more serious than a fallacious appearance of being weak where we are not weak, and pusillanimous where we are not pusillanimous, to concede a point of dispute with a friendly nation is a sign of true strength and confidence.

*The terms of the Czar's promise, and those of the treaty which seem to violate its spirit, will be found quoted in the Appendix (I).

IX.

DIVAGATIONS.

(1874-80.)

THE events of the last few years are too fresh in the memories of Englishmen to need recalling in detail ; but they are at the same time too important to be slurred over. In point of fact, the history of the country from 1876 to 1880, so far as foreign affairs are concerned, is a history of popular emancipation from old traditions, the more significant because it seems to have brought us past the crisis of our national development.

The diplomatic incidents of the previous period were casual, isolated, and practically confined to the domain of the Cabinet and the Departments. The incidents which distinguish Lord Beaconsfield's long Administration were critical, imperial, protracted, and they occupied the mind of the whole country for years in succession.

The enfranchisement of the working classes in 1867 had only partially affected the tone of public opinion—and this mainly in regard to domestic matters—during Mr Gladstone's first term of office as Prime Minister. Perhaps the general election of 1874 did as much as any other single cause to awaken the sense of power and the resolution which might have been expected to follow upon the acquisition of the Parliamentary vote. The men who had been so constantly flattered by the dread openly expressed of them in many quarters found

themselves defeated and discredited. They felt that they had not put forth their strength. Some of them no doubt had abstained from voting without any idea that Mr Gladstone would be expelled from office. The defeat was worth more to them than a victory, since it shewed them the necessity of union and discipline, without which the franchise would be an empty boon. To those who had the opportunity of judging how the current of democratic feeling had ebbed and flowed, it was manifest that on the very morrow of the elections of 1874 the bulk of the Liberal party was virtually united in efforts to shake off the domination of their rivals. If this be true, we may judge how great a strain was put upon the patience of the constituencies for the next six years.

This strain was caused, or raised to its highest degree of tension, by the fact that a Ministry endowed with power in a moment of reaction by the domestic differences of the Liberals, by sectional discontents and the vengeance of harassed interests—chosen in 1874 for no purpose more distinctly than to give rest to a country weary of heroism at the Home Office—had the opportunity three or four years later, and even six years later, of dealing with some of the most important questions of foreign policy which had ever been submitted to the judgment of an English Ministry. This was perfectly legitimate and constitutional, but it was so incongruous as to be thoroughly absurd. Septennial Parliaments have occasionally been regarded as one of the bulwarks of our national safety, but in this case the institution had produced a result which was to say the least of it remarkable.

It might be unsafe to affirm that at no time after the year 1876 would an appeal to the constituencies have given popular sanction to the acts of Lord Beacons-

field's Government. But this is not the question. Whatever might have been the outcome of a general election when the animosity against Russia, or the admiration for Lord Beaconsfield, was at its highest, the fact is that this appeal was not made, and this sanction was not given. It was a flaw in the basis of the imperialist foreign policy that a Government acceding to power in the reaction of 1874 should have been found, without any further consultation of the popular judgment, turning queens into empresses and esquires into knights of the garter, brandishing sepoy's at Malta and ghorkas in Afghanistan, acquiring places of arms in the Levant and treaties at Berlin, receiving ovations at Charing Cross and royal visits at Hughenden—all on the strength of a policy which was generally repugnant to the sentiment of the nation.

The evidence of this repugnance, though it may not be strong enough to carry conviction to every mind amidst the controversial heat of the present generation, will yet in all probability be strong enough to satisfy the candid reader of history. The facts may be briefly recapitulated. Lord Beaconsfield owed his elevation in 1874 to the abstinence of Liberal voters, and not to an absolute majority of his supporters over the supporters of Mr Gladstone. His mandate was clearly of a negative character, as admitted by himself and his colleagues. The first two sessions of his Administration were characterized by permissive and inoperative Acts of a domestic order; and it was not until Lord Northbrook was virtually recalled from India, until the Queen was proclaimed Empress and her Minister had addressed his first significant hints to Russia, that ordinary Englishmen began to understand that their Government had an active foreign policy.

If then Lord Beaconsfield at the outset of his Administration had no mandate from the country in regard to foreign affairs, and if at the end of his Administration his policy was emphatically condemned by the constituencies, the only remaining doubt is whether in the meantime, between 1876 and 1879, the imperialist policy received the assent and approval of the nation. Unquestionably it had pleased a considerable number of professed Liberals, and it enabled the Government to command more than their normal majority in the two Houses of Parliament. In the metropolis, and especially in the higher grades of the social scale, there was an apparent preponderance of opinion in favour of the action of the Cabinet; and during the continuance of the Russo-Turkish war, and for some time after the conclusion of the Treaty of Berlin, Ministers could count upon resolutions of confidence from mass-meetings in various parts of the country.

But on the other hand there were at all times evident marks of dissatisfaction with the policy of Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues. The feeling aroused in 1876 by the Turkish massacres in Bulgaria was deep, national, overwhelming. In the autumn of this year it was impossible for the avowed friends of Turkey to hold a public meeting. It was not the eloquence of Mr Gladstone which roused the popular fervour, for there were many indignation meetings in London and the provinces before Mr Gladstone quitted his retreat at Hawarden and entered the arena. A resolution was passed almost universally at these meetings to the effect that England ought never, under any circumstances, to fight again as an ally of the Porte; and there is no room for doubt that this resolution was the deliberate judgment of the people of England. The enthusiastic Conference on the

Eastern Question at St James's Hall in December, 1876, marked the culmination of this sentiment against the corrupt rule of the Turks. The rejection by the Porte of the demands made upon it by the Conference of Constantinople in the beginning of the following year strengthened the hands of those who maintained that England ought to combine with the other Great Powers in exerting pressure upon the Sultan's Government, and to discontinue anything like moral aid or encouragement at Constantinople. In the spring of 1877 the English Cabinet made an effort, in common with the continental Powers, to bring Turkey to reason. The protocol, signed on the 31st of March, if it had been loyally accepted by the Porte, might have saved Turkey from the disasters which followed. At any rate the action of our Government at this period was fairly in harmony with the sense of the nation; and, coupled with the suspicions entertained of the insincerity of Russia in her invasion of the Sultan's dominions, it conciliated the minds of many Englishmen who had hitherto strongly condemned the isolated action of the Cabinet.

Thus it may perhaps be said that from the opening of the campaign to the date of the Berlin Congress—or during the greater part of 1877 and 1878—the policy of Lord Beaconsfield was more approximately a popular policy than at any previous or subsequent time. But the withdrawal of Lord Derby from the Foreign Office and from the Government, in March 1878, was coincident with the defection of many other supporters of the Ministry, who had found their confidence too severely tested by the ostentatious preparations for war. The triumphs reaped after this by Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury, though notable in themselves, do not seem to have roused the general enthusiasm of the

country. The ovations at Charing Cross and the Duke of Wellington's Riding School, the personal favour displayed towards Lord Beaconsfield by the Queen, the gold casket from California and the gold wreath from Leamington, were natural responses to a dramatic exhibition of success. But they did not imply the calm and sober approval of the nation, and we should not be warranted in affirming that this approval had ever been given to the policy of the Government as a whole.

The object of our present inquiry is to examine whether Lord Beaconsfield's policy was at any time such as to deserve the name of a national and popular policy—even in the limited sense of being momentarily endorsed by the nation. It does not appear to have been so. When his personal successes were most brilliant and conspicuous there was always a strong and increasing volume of opinion in the country, felt by those who were competent to discern it, and expressed by a large majority of its organs in the Press, which mistrusted and condemned him.

Of what kind, then, was the policy of Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet, if it was not national and popular? It has been styled an imperialist policy, and the term is not inappropriate. It was also a personal policy, for it possessed many of the individual characteristics of the Premier. It was always in evidence. Each development was theatrical, startling, not to say transpontine. The man was in his measures; and if we wished to believe that the nation was rendered stronger, more commanding, and more glorious, it was exacted of us at the same time that we should acknowledge a higher and yet a higher flight of the genius of Benjamin Disraeli.

Though Lord Beaconsfield was constantly carrying his readers and hearers back to the politics of the eighteenth century, and eulogising the temper of Bolingbroke, Shelburne, and Pitt, it was not on the traditions of these statesmen that his own policy was wholly or generally framed. Whilst Palmerston was in office he had been compelled by party exigencies to take a line opposed to Palmerston's ideas ; and yet in 1874 and 1875, when he set himself to consider what he should do with his splendid opportunity, it was to Palmerston's armoury that he had recourse for his weapons. So far as his policy may be regarded as coming within the limits of English traditional statesmanship, it was a policy based and built on that of the Whigs. Under Palmerston he had protested against too much activity in external affairs ; but when he had made up his mind to adopt a foreign policy of his own he decided upon an order of ideas which pre-supposed interference and initiation all over the world. Of course there is no parallel between the two men except in the matter of their unwearying activity, and their resolution to make England predominant. Palmerston took his opportunities as they came ; Beaconsfield made them. It has been charged against the older statesman that he presumed too much upon the ill-will of Englishmen towards Russia, thereby diminishing the chances of an understanding in 1853 ; and further, that he encouraged the animosity against France a few years later, at the imminent risk of war. A tendency of this kind was unquestionably displayed by Lord Beaconsfield, who kept open the Eastern Question when it might have been closed, threw constant obstacles in the way of an agreement between England and Russia, and on several other occasions avoided a settlement when it suited his plans to have an open question on his hands.

No one knew the meaning and force of a political tradition better than Lord Beaconsfield ; and amongst his colleagues there were men who looked upon the traditions of their party with the utmost reverence. Yet no English statesman has more frequently or irreverently thrown traditions overboard, wherever there was a chance of initiating a policy which might triumph and go down to history as his own. Even if he professed to follow a tradition he gave it some new development, which caused it to advance (or seem to advance) more in one year than in the previous two hundred.

From one act we may learn the character of all. We teach our schoolboys that English liberties are founded upon the revolutionary proceedings of their ancestors, and especially upon the fifty years of revolt against the tyranny of the Stuart kings, ending with the Revolution of 1688. We impress upon them the fact that our charters and Bills of Rights were exacted from the Crown by constant determination and firmness, and that the chief guarantees of our existing institutions rest upon the basis of a contract entered into between the English Parliament and a Dutch Prince. The lessons of this particular period of English history are so important that no child in a national school ought to earn his grant from the State until he has been made familiar with it ; but Lord Beaconsfield began his final epoch of office—his only epoch of power—by throwing the Revolution overboard. He thought it was his vocation to re-model the history of England, and calmly asked the nation to proclaim their queen an empress. If the true instinct of the people had not now declared itself in spite of his Parliamentary majority, the imperial titles would have come into use in England as well as in India, and the sulkiness of a few Liberals in 1874 would have

been visited with a punishment more abnormal even than the abnormal punishment which it received.

Many of Lord Beaconsfield's acts were distinguished by a similar spirit of mutiny against the constitution ; and in some cases they trampled upon precedent and tradition with at least temporary impunity. The introduction of Indian troops into Europe was absolutely subversive of the law of England, and was an exercise of individual authority which richly deserved impeachment. But this was a case in which the sentiment of the people at large—the democratic sentiment of the masses—was less informed by knowledge, and it consequently escaped the immediate and effective condemnation which had been accorded to the Royal Titles Act. Yet the offence was in reality greater, for it was committed not only in reliance upon the popular ignorance or indifference, but without so much as a reference to Parliament. The House of Commons separated for an Easter recess with an assurance that no cause existed for anxiety ; and immediately afterwards the nation was informed that native Indian troops were on their way to Malta.

These were matters affecting the constitution rather than the foreign policy of the country ; at any rate in the first instance. But the whole action of Lord Beaconsfield's Government in dealing with the Eastern Question tended to disturb our relations with friendly Powers, and it was on this account a double transgression against the people of England. It is at any time and in any State a grave crime in a Minister to risk or force on a war which might be avoided ; and it was a special offence in Lord Beaconsfield to pursue such a policy, because he had seen the path on which the nation had begun to tread. He had observed (no man was more able or more likely to understand it) that the

new generations of Englishmen were bent on preserving peace as much as possible with all countries—that they were prepared to do this, when they honourably could, at some sacrifice of feeling and immediate profit—that they were henceforth minded to arbitrate rather than to quarrel, and to act in concert for an indubitably good cause rather than to isolate themselves with a view to independent and perilous action. He knew that the classes enfranchised in 1867, by his own act, were overwhelmingly democratic in their feelings and aspirations, that they made for peace, retrenchment, social and political reform. If he had resolved on a straightforward course he might have given the country large and beneficent measures, within the lines of the Conservative party, and still acceptable to all parties. He might have recalled to the minds of Englishmen that social progress was equally necessary with political progress. He might have dwelt impressively on hygienic laws, glancing in his manifestoes and speeches at the importance of the sewage question, and even venturing on such an epigram as “*sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas.*” He might have persuaded his followers to pass an Agricultural Holdings Act, a Friendly Societies Act, an Artizans’ Dwellings Act—Acts that would work, that would not require the subsequent assent of every wealthy individual affected by them, and that would not injuriously press upon the very people whom they were intended to benefit.

No doubt this would have been difficult to accomplish; but there would have been all the more credit in the achievement. Instead of attempting it, and persisting until he had overcome every obstacle, he preferred only to make a show of domestic legislation for the first two sessions, and then he began to unfold his pro-

gramme of imperial development. Though he had something to say of the democracy which was complimentary and flattering, and though he maintained that the monarch and the Tory peers were the natural allies of the masses, his foreign policy was manifestly opposed to the interests of the working-men, above all other classes in the country. For the most part the working-men recognised this fact, and stood opposed to him from first to last.

If Lord Beaconsfield's policy had been acquiesced in by the nation, and if it had thus retained a logical connection with the policy which preceded and followed it, there would have been a special inducement to consider it in detail; for there are few periods in which the student of history will encounter so many striking illustrations of English political principles. But the necessity does not arise. The imperialist ideas were never accepted or acquiesced in. They were strenuously protested against as un-English and unsound, and more than one or two of Lord Beaconsfield's acts were reversed after the general election of 1880. But so long as Lord Derby remained at the Foreign Office the attitude of the Cabinet was in great measure diplomatically correct. It was only when open threats of war were followed by equivocations and secret conventions that our policy was seriously deflected from the straightforward path.

Lord Derby left the Cabinet when his colleagues had decided to call out the reserves. He had been uneasy before, but he had loyally supported the Prime Minister, and he must be held largely responsible for all that took place in 1875-7. The most important diplomatic act of this period was the refusal to co-operate in the Berlin

Memorandum, which was agreed to in May 1876 by the courts of Berlin, St Petersburg, and Vienna, and which might have been made a collective instrument of Europe if the English Government had not declined to acquiesce in it. This refusal on our part prevented the concert of the Powers, and took away every hope of securing peace by combined pressure upon the Porte. The effect of England's isolation was so thoroughly calculated to aggravate the question which had arisen in the East that Lord Derby could only find an excuse in the belief that he was acting upon the general traditions of England's policy in the past. It is worth while to look at the reasons alleged by him in his despatches for a course which certainly appears to have been most unfortunate and disastrous.

The proposal of the Powers was directed in the first place to the pacification of Bosnia and the Herzegovina. Servia had made terms with the Porte, but the Servian and Montenegrin peoples were both giving aid to the Bosnians. A Bulgarian rising was at the same moment being suppressed with merciless rigour, though the massacres which soon afterwards aroused the indignation of the world had not yet been made public. On the 19th of May Lord Derby wrote to Lord Odo Russell at Berlin, expressing the regret of himself and his colleagues in finding themselves unable to co-operate in the policy of the three Eastern Powers. "Her Majesty's Government," he said, "appreciate the advantages of concerted action by the Powers in all that relates to the questions arising out of the insurrection, but they cannot consent to join in proposals which they do not conscientiously believe likely to effect the pacification which all the Powers desire to see attained."

This was in a sense unanswerable; for if the Beacons-

field Cabinet did not believe that the proposed mediation would result in peace they could feel no strong inducement to take part in it. But the object of a mediation is to try to bring about a certain end, and not merely to register a foregone conclusion.

It was impossible for the English Cabinet to be assured of Turkey's insuperable obstinacy, however much they might have seen reason to anticipate it; and their misgivings were not a sufficiently forcible argument to justify them in refusing to make an effort, or in putting an additional obstacle in the way of success. If concert had already been tried and had failed, there would be reason in declining to make another hopeless attempt; but it was not so. The concerted action of the Powers had succeeded with Turkey in the case of the Greeks, and there was no cause to doubt that it would be equally successful now, if backed with equal firmness. The consequence of England's abstention was precisely what might have been expected; it hardened Turkey's heart and stiffened her neck. We refused to act with the Powers because we doubted whether we could make peace, and by this means we rendered the continuance and spread of the war inevitable.

It was the fear of weakening Turkey—a bulwark of England against the aggression of her natural enemy—which made the Cabinet hesitate to urge peace upon her; and Lord Derby confesses this in a very candid manner. "It appears to Her Majesty's Government," he wrote, "that they would not be justified in insisting upon the Porte consenting to an armistice without knowing whether the military situation admitted of its being established without prejudice to the Turkish Government. Her Majesty's Government would not advise the Porte against acceding to an armistice should

the Turkish Government consider that the political and military position admitted of it." The Powers had sent ships to Salonica—where consuls had recently been murdered by Turkish fanatics—and the English Government thought fit to add an opinion "that care should be taken that the naval forces of foreign Powers are not employed in any manner contrary to the Treaty rights of the Porte, or subversive of the Sultan's authority."

In a despatch to Sir Henry Elliot at Constantinople, forwarded on the same day, Lord Derby encloses a copy of his despatch to Lord Odo Russell; and he writes to our Ambassador at Constantinople in this strain:—"I have to point out to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government have, since the outbreak of the insurrection in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, deprecated the diplomatic intervention of other Powers in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire. . . . They cannot conceal from themselves that the gravity of the situation has arisen, in a great measure, from the weakness and apathy of the Porte in dealing with the insurrection in its earlier stages."

This was written on May 19. Just five weeks later the first news of the Bulgarian atrocities was received in England. It is not surprising that the English people, who were startled out of all calmness and patience by the revelations of the newspaper correspondents and commissioners, should have seen a connection of some sort between the policy of the English Government and the action of the Porte, and that when the language of Lord Derby's despatches came to be printed in a Blue-book, the virtual encouragement of Turkish energy in the suppression of revolt should be looked upon as partly accounting for the terrible severities in Bulgaria. Nothing, of course, could have been further from Lord Derby's intention, or from the intention of

the Cabinet of which he was a member. That their aim was to strengthen Turkey against the chance of disintegration, and against the supposed designs of Russia in particular, was evident enough; but any amelioration of the condition of the subject races which might be compatible with this policy would have been heartily welcomed by them. The question for us to consider is whether they had not already, by rejecting the proposed concert of Europe, pushed their policy to an extreme, and run unjustifiable risks in order to make the English dominate over the continental mode of settling the affairs of the Continent.

It may be easy for an Englishman to believe that English modes of action are better than modes suggested by three continental States; but patriotic faith became too absurd when it took the form of believing that English isolation was better than international concert and mediation, in the interests of oppressed nationalities, and for the renewal of peace in a country where continued war was a common danger. Yet this was the kind of faith which had to be exercised by the supporters of the Government policy in 1876. It could only be exercised by those who made jealousy of Russia paramount over every other consideration; and the policy of the Government could only be maintained by statesmen who believed that Russia was our natural enemy, that English interests would be largely promoted by counter-plotting Russia, and that in adopting such a course they were developing and handing down a national tradition.

No doubt this was Lord Derby's belief; and whatever motives Lord Beaconsfield may have had in addition it was also his professed belief. But what ground was there for the contention? No doubt we had a traditional distrust of Russia. It existed even at the end of the

eighteenth century, nursed perhaps by the outrage on Polish liberties. It was renewed under Canning, when he set himself to destroy the Holy Alliance, of which the first Alexander was the guiding spirit. It was fostered and confirmed under Lord Palmerston, who led the anti-Russian section in Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet, and who was largely responsible for the hostile mood of this country during the Crimean war. The sentiment endured for many years—with decreasing strength and bitterness, but still with sufficient life in the old stock to revive under the influence of fresh complications in the East. On the whole, however, it seemed as though Russophobia were a thing of the past, or at least gradually dying out. The amity of the two nations increased; the arrangement of a marriage between an English prince and a Russian princess appeared to many in the light of a guarantee of better understanding in the future. Then came the arbitrary repudiation by the Russian Government of a restriction which England had placed upon it in 1856; and though perhaps the majority of people in this country cared not one jot about the reversal of the Black Sea clauses, yet it is certain that the incident of 1870 had roused much indignation amongst Englishmen of the more aggressive school. The indignation rankled; and the embers of old animosity were fanned into a flame by the rapid progress of General Kauffmann in Asia. With such a state of feeling in England, and especially amongst the influential sections of the party in power, it needed only a compliant or a clever statesman to restore the traditions both of popular opinion and of the Foreign Office.

Unfortunately for Lord Beaconsfield and his Cabinet—unfortunately, it cannot be doubted, for their repute as far-seeing and prudent statesmen—it was less easy to

excite a genuine (that is to say a wild and inconsiderate) Russophobia amongst the masses of Englishmen than it was to get the processes of diplomacy back into their former grooves. Not that the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary adhered closely and candidly to the official traditions of Eastern policy. They departed from these on several occasions, introducing developments which would have caused the despair of Canning and excited the contempt of Palmerston. If their reference to tradition had been precise and their action perfectly regular—if they had quarrelled with Russia and yet avoided anything like a violation of the constitution—there can be little doubt that they would have been allowed even to drag the country into war: not indeed without a strenuous protest, and the forfeiture of office at the next general election, but without that cogent argument and that pressure of public opinion which rendered war impossible for us in 1877-8.

As it was, the extravagant departures of Lord Beaconsfield from official and popular traditions, his offences against the authority of Parliament and the sacredness of the constitution, and the cynicism with which he manipulated the credit of England and risked the peace of the nation, arrayed against him the judgment and the votes of a large majority of Englishmen. The imperialist policy, with its ramifications in Asia and Africa, stood condemned in 1880 with an emphasis rarely exceeded at any previous crisis in the history of our relations with foreign States. And the condemnation had been pronounced by that democracy which Lord Beaconsfield had so notably reinforced by his Reform Act of 1867.

X.

THE NEW DEPARTURE.

THE General Election of 1880 turned especially on questions of foreign policy, and the verdict of the constituencies was given against Lord Beaconsfield, and in favour of Mr Gladstone, on issues which had been raised by the action of the former and the criticism of the latter. The country was appealed to mainly and primarily to decide whether its foreign affairs should be conducted on the system inaugurated in 1874 or after the fashion of 1870 and 1872. The question was perfectly simple. The contrast between the two statesmen representing these opposite methods of dealing with international affairs was so marked that no man could fail to see what his vote implied. An "imperial" policy on one side was balanced against a national policy, or what claimed to be a national policy, on the other; and the people at large was called upon to make its choice. It is not often that a nation has the opportunity of so definitely expressing its will and attaining its object. No other monarchy in Europe has ever been in a position to dictate to its rulers the kind of foreign policy which it elects to adopt. If England was able to do this in 1880, and chose to be guided by national, democratic, and essentially moral principles, it was because we had virtually in 1867, and actually in the period between 1876 and 1880, taken an entirely new departure.

We had (the fact will bear repetition) converted our-

selves or been converted into a democracy from the moment when every ratepaying householder was endowed with the franchise. From this time forward it was in the power of the masses to control the Ministry of the day (subject, of course, to a Septennial Act)—to decree a programme of domestic and foreign policy—to give tone and colour to the whole government of the country. The change was potentially complete. It remained for the masses themselves to make use of their privileges, and for genuine patriots and statesmen to train the emancipated orders in the proper discharge of political duties. The State which had now come into existence was capable of almost any development ; but it was necessary in the first instance that the actual wielders of power and incumbents of office should give the initial motion to this new generation.

Now Mr Gladstone's first Administration, which was nicknamed "heroic" by his rivals and critics, really deserved the epithet, for it gave precisely such an initial motion to the democracy as it was fitted to receive. The Administration of 1868 was honest and courageous ; it attempted and achieved great reforms ; it promoted peace and retrenchment ; it governed with sincerity and moral earnestness. Its power came to an end with the union and cohesion of its supporters ; but its system of government had not failed, and not one of its principles had been discredited.

The Administration which succeeded Mr Gladstone's in 1874 did not attempt to carry on the work begun by its predecessor, but rather sought to counteract it. Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues could not, if they would, have added velocity to the motion of the English democracy, for the simple reason that they feared its power, and thought it their duty to limit and check it. Instead

of ennobling they vulgarised and debased the masses, by enlisting them in quarrels with other nations, by teaching them to look for glory in unjust warfare, and by conducting the foreign affairs of the country on crooked and slippery paths. Their success would have been greater and more injurious than it actually was if the people themselves, encouraged and aided by patriotic men, had not repudiated the lessons of their teachers.

In 1880 the people, as a whole, threw off the incubus which had rested upon them, took new courage and strength from their relapse, and voted themselves back into the old "heroic" courses. They understood what the issues were upon which an appeal was being made to them. A Liberal or democrat may have reasoned with himself at the last general election somewhat after this fashion :—

"The question which is put before us at this crisis is capable of being reduced within a comparatively narrow compass. It is not a question of more or less patriotism on one side than on the other. It is not a question of the glory or prestige of the country, which are as safe in the hands of one party as in those of another. It is no question of greater loyalty or national spirit with Lord Beaconsfield than with Lord Hartington or Mr Gladstone. The Government spokesmen may say this, but they are wrong. The real question, the true issue, which should now be present in the mind of each individual voter, and which will decide every honest vote, every single election, and the aggregate result of the national conflict, may be expressed in a few words. Is England to remain true to her character as a free, self-governing, strong and fearless nation, valuing freedom more than life, and justice more than gain, refusing to be dictated to by any other Power in the world, and always proving

herself to be the friend of oppressed nationalities, no matter how great their oppressors might be? If England is to continue in this glorious path, wherein she has gained honour and liberties, then the nation has to consider whether Lord Beaconsfield or Lord Hartington is the more likely to sustain her—whether Sir Stafford Northcote or Mr Gladstone is best fitted to control her finances—whether Lord Salisbury or Lord Granville is most to be trusted in dealing with the foreign relations of this important empire. Englishmen want to be great, but they want above all to be morally great—in other words, they want their word and their will to be as powerful as their gunpowder and bayonets. More than this, they want their strength, such as it is, to be exerted in good causes, and especially in aiding young and struggling nationalities to win freedom and vigour. Now, whatever Lord Beaconsfield has done, whatever the tendency of his Cabinet has been during the past few years, one thing is certain, namely, that the power of England has been used against the cause of freedom and independence, against the interests of peace and justice, in almost every quarter of the globe.

“As for the claims of the Liberal leaders to confidence, it is to be remembered that we owe to modern Liberalism, in the first place, the Reform Act, which abolished rotten boroughs, created many new seats in the most important country towns, and enfranchised a large proportion of the population. Even the second Reform Act of 1867 was due to Liberal pressure, though actually passed by the Tories. To Liberalism we owe Free Trade, which has made bread cheap in England, beyond all chance of returning to famine prices. To the same great principle we are indebted for cheap newspapers, freedom of public speech and writing, the penny postage, national

education, the abolition of slavery, the repeal of such oppressive taxes as those on windows, on advertisements and the like, and the removal of the disabilities of Jews. This is a glorious roll of reforms, which have conferred upon the whole country the most enormous benefits; and it would be an ingratitude of the deepest dye if professing Liberals were to forget them at a crisis like this, and desert their leaders for the party which has opposed every one of these measures. In finance, the Liberals are no less entitled to the support of the country than in the matter of general reform. The last Liberal Government remitted more than twelve millions sterling of taxation. They reduced the National Debt by the vast sum of twenty-six millions sterling, and did not evade the liability for their own acts by the clumsy device of making their successors pay for what they themselves undertook to do. They lowered the income tax to as little as threepence in the pound, and then, being more than able to pay their way, were prepared to abolish it altogether. They raised the trade of the country to a state of high prosperity, established favourable international treaties of commerce, and maintained harmonious relations with foreign countries. At the end of six years they showed a surplus of six millions sterling, which they left in the national exchequer at the disposal of the Tories. The Tories, on the other hand, began by spending these six millions in a questionable manner, and, now that their turn has come to give up the seals of office, they show a virtual deficit of eight millions. They have increased our annual expenditure from seventy millions to the enormous sum of eighty-five millions, most of the increase being devoted to military and naval purposes, although they have not materially improved our defences, nor added a single

ironclad of their own devising to the British navy. And whilst they have aggravated the distress of the country, and paralysed commercial enterprise when they ought to have found means to encourage it, their vaunted foreign policy has only increased the complications which they profess to have diminished.

“ Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues, so far from giving us an honourable peace and a high prestige, have lowered our reputation all over the world, and have threatened war when there was not the slightest cause for it. They plunged us into a quarrel with Afghanistan, thus making the Ameer our enemy when he might have been our friend, and destroying the natural frontier between India and Russia in Asia, which the wisest Indian statesmen declared to be the strongest we could have. They simultaneously plunged us into a miserable war with the Zulus, without any provocation on the part of those savages, and thereby caused the sacrifice of many lives, and the absolute waste of several millions sterling. As for our prestige abroad, we used to be considered the champions of freedom and the natural friends of oppressed nationalities. This reputation, which Englishmen were wont to value so highly, they have jeopardised, if not destroyed. We have been the friends and abettors of tyrants ; and the country is now insulted by being told that Germany and Austria, the willing victims of gigantic military despotisms, anxiously desire the return of Lord Beaconsfield to power. The Slavonic nations have obtained freedom in spite of the efforts of our Government to curtail or prevent it ; and they have obtained it at the hands of our alleged enemy, the despotic Government of Russia. Surely shrewd and common-sense people will not be so deceived as to take the imperialists at their own valuation ; nor will they listen

to the calumny that a Liberal Government would do less for England, for humanity, and for peace."

These were the arguments constantly employed in the political campaign which ended in April 1880, and they prevailed with thousands of wavering voters. The Liberal majority included the mass of the working men, the abstaining sections of 1874, the philosophical democrats, and all who conceived that the traditions of their country had been unwarrantably interrupted by Lord Beaconsfield. There were indeed many—the most prudent as well as the most timid of these—who feared the effect of a too sudden reversal of the policy actually pursued by the outgoing Government, and who apprehended from the triumph of the democracy evils almost as great as those which they wished to eradicate. No doubt it was a very delicate question indeed whether an incoming Government might safely undo the diplomatic work of their predecessors, and how far they could with decency and good faith back out of engagements entered into by men who had lost the confidence of the nation. That was a question which it was necessary to leave to the tact of a new Ministry, guided and informed by public opinion ; but Mr Gladstone took care to reassure the country on this point. In one of his speeches in Midlothian he referred to an insinuation of this kind which had been publicly made by a Cabinet Minister, to the effect that if the Liberals came into power they would at once make an end of all the engagements into which the Conservative Government had entered, and "relieve the country of the consequences at no other expense than its honour and good faith." This Mr Gladstone strenuously denied. "However they might deplore," he said, "the misdeeds and dangers of the course pursued by the Government, the country must

abide by the consequences. Prudence, care, and diligence might do much in course of time, but whatever faith required must be accepted."

When the elections were over, and Mr Gladstone was installed in power, he and his colleagues were immediately required to consider the various questions of foreign and imperial concern which had been left to them as a legacy by Lord Beaconsfield's Government. The difficulty soon made itself apparent. It was evidently harder for the Liberals to set straight what had become involved, and to draw the line between repudiation and acceptance, than it had been for the Conservatives to follow out their definite and preconceived policy. There was not merely the problem itself, and the necessity in each case of providing alternative courses of action, but there was also the political complication at home, which threw on the Government the task of consulting and satisfying all classes in the kingdom—the defeated imperialists no less than the Whigs and the democrats. Amongst these it was impossible to avoid the giving of offence to all ; and thus, at the very moment when high principles had triumphed, the vast inconveniences of our imperfect system of party Government were illustrated with unusual emphasis.

Our national traditions of foreign policy took a new departure ; but the first results were attended by not a little which was unfortunate and even disastrous. It is noteworthy, but not anomalous, when the reasons of the phenomenon are considered, that the gravest consequences of this sudden change of policy were experienced in our own dependencies. In Europe things went fairly well. The behests of the country were faithfully and skilfully

executed by our Ministers ; and as they were just and reasonable behests, tending to peace and consolidation, little more than patient firmness was necessary to secure the assent of the Powers to the proposals of the English Cabinet. The whole Eastern Question was settled—as far as it could be—without the loss of a single life, with an insignificant expenditure of money, and in almost undisturbed amity. But the case was different when we had to deal with the outlying portions of our own empire, and to cut off the living tentacles of British aggression.

Public opinion had demanded that restitution should be made in two quarters where the proconsular authority of our representatives abroad—to use a term which has of late become familiar—had been stretched to an audacious extreme. On the north-western frontier of India and on the borders of Natal an aggressive policy had been adopted, in both cases apparently in reliance upon the known dispositions of the Home Government, and in both cases reversing a former policy approved and sanctioned by the generality of Englishmen. The policy of non-intervention in Afghanistan had been accepted so deliberately, and been so long undisturbed, that none but a few well-informed people in England, and only a small proportion of Anglo-Indians, suspected that the return of Lord Northbrook and the mission of Lord Lytton could be a prelude to the re-opening of this closed question. The Afghan war excited the alarm of the experts and the strong dislike of the people at large—a dislike converted into indignation by the disasters which followed as its natural sequel. One of the most imperative mandates entrusted to Mr Gladstone and Lord Hartington in 1880 was the injunction to withdraw the English troops from Cabul and Candahar, and

to leave the Afghans in possession of their own country. The true "scientific frontier" was declared by the English constituencies (of course informed and guided by men most competent to give an opinion) to lie where such men as Lords Lawrence and Northbrook had drawn and held it: and the declaration was one to which it was necessary to give effect.

The accomplishment of the task was assigned to Lord Hartington, and there is no reason to question the ability with which he set about it. The withdrawal could not be made out of hand, and the order could not be issued at a day's notice. There were military considerations, considerations of health, and even of the interests of the Afghans themselves, which required the exercise of much deliberation. The final decision of the Government seems to have come as speedily as the conditions of the problem would allow, and the disaster of Maiwand, though possibly due to the scepticism of the natives as to our intention of evacuating the city of Candahar, could scarcely have been avoided by anything which Lord Hartington might have done. As for the evil results to ourselves, the injury to our prestige, and the menace to our safety in India, which were confidently predicted by advocates of the forward policy, there are perhaps few serious politicians or competent authorities of any kind who maintain either that Mr Gladstone's Government could have pursued a different course or that the course actually pursued has made our position in India weaker than it would have been if we had held our footing in Afghanistan.

The case of South Africa was different. In this instance, it might be thought, there was less reason for

delay in carrying out the behests of the country. The people on whose liberties we had encroached were less formidable (or at the time they seemed less formidable) than the people of Afghanistan; and there was no powerful nation behind them, as the Russians were behind the Afghans, to give us colourable cause of alarm, or to be an element in the problem of retrocession. Our authorities in 1880 probably felt something approaching to contempt for the military strength of the Boers; and being thus without fear of evil hap they might safely have been the more willing and zealous in retiring. But instead of this the absence of peril only seemed to make the Colonial Office and the Cape Government more circumspect about their task; and that which actually happened to us in the Transvaal was precisely what might have been foretold. The Boers knew all about the general election in England; they knew that the English people desired that the annexation should be rescinded; and yet, in place of orders to withdraw, they felt the grasp of England apparently tightening, and saw fresh troops marching up the country. The reasons which have been given for this protraction of the occupation are not satisfactory. They amount, in one form or another, to pleas of English interests within or without the Republic. But these were the pleas which had been raised by Sir Bartle Frere and Mr Sprigg, by Lord Carnarvon and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; and they were pleas which had not commended themselves to the minds of Englishmen at home.

The constituencies had been specially emphatic and outspoken in regard to the forward policy in South Africa, which was condemned as altogether out of harmony with modern English sentiment. Before the dissolution of 1880 the Liberal Opposition had vigorously

impeached the conduct of Sir Bartle Frere, in a resolution marked by unusual severity of tone. It had been confidently expected that the repudiation of this policy, and in particular the recall of Sir Bartle Frere, would have been amongst the very earliest acts of the new Government. But Sir Bartle Frere was not recalled ; the restitution of the Transvaal was delayed ; and a fresh war of aggression was undertaken by the Cape authorities under the virtual sanction—at any rate without the instant and uncompromising veto—of the Liberal Ministry.

The reasons given for the continuance at his post of a High Commissioner on whom the responsibility of former aggressions had been laid possessed some weight—both in themselves and by the character of the statesmen who urged them. The Cape Parliament had not given its decision on the important question of Confederation. It was desirable that Sir Bartle Frere should be allowed to continue his efforts in this direction, since there was room to think that the Confederation of South Africa might be the best possible guarantee of peace in the future. The motive of personal forbearance and generosity was not so strong where the interests of States and the uprightness of political standards were concerned. Be this as it may, there can be little doubt that the leisurely movement of the authorities in this matter was fraught with bad results, and was a flaw in the policy of the Government.

The two incidents referred to above suggest certain wider considerations as to the power of our representatives in various quarters of our empire beyond the seas ; and there are few more interesting topics in the whole range

of questions with which the men who conduct the imperial affairs of England have to deal. The attitude and behaviour of our High Commissioners, viceroys, governors, and consuls towards the people of our dependencies on the one part, and towards adjacent foreign countries on the other part, affect us as a nation in a very peculiar degree. Our honour and credit are in their hands, which they can stake and jeopardise without any immediate restraint, and which they may even forfeit before the mass of the English people has an opportunity of checking them. There is no country in the world for which these considerations are so vital as they are for ourselves, because the British Empire has frontiers in every clime and neighbours of almost every nationality. No doubt the danger has been diminished by the beneficent intervention of science, which has brought us into close contact with the colonies, and has enabled our Secretaries of State to converse in their offices with the rulers of far-distant territories. But recent occurrences have shown us how great the peril may yet be, and how necessary it is for a self-governing people in England to limit and define the authority of its proconsuls. The new departure of our foreign policy will not be satisfactory or well-directed until either the colonial and vice-regal governments are more closely subordinated to the will of the English constituencies, or the bonds between them and the mother country are made to depend entirely upon the free will of the colonists, as well as upon the will of the nation at home. Until one or other of these modifications has been effected the honour and interest of England must be more critically at stake than the interests of the colonies themselves. *

* No more telling illustration could be cited of the danger referred to in the text than the case of the destruction of Batanga, on the West

The general question as to the action of our representatives abroad, in special connection with Afghanistan and South Africa, was raised in Parliament in the session of 1880; and the debate on this occasion was

Coast of Africa, which was thus related by Mr Henry Richard in the House of Commons, April 30, 1881:—"The ruler of the town of Batanga had been nicknamed King Jack by people who frequented it. The inhabitants captured a person entitled to British protection and carried him into the bush. He was detained for seven weeks and then escaped, having, according to his own acknowledgement, been treated very kindly, or at least without any undue harshness. But a man who desired to magnify his own office called a meeting of the European inhabitants of the town, and they unanimously decided that the case called for the application of force. Who were those European residents? They consisted of four men, two of whom might be Englishmen, but two were Germans; and the British Consul thought he had a right to call on the commander of Her Majesty's ships to act as Protector-General of all the commercial adventurers who went to that coast, to whatever nationality they belonged. The commander on the station did not seem much enamoured of the task he was invited to perform, and he demanded proof that the man who had been wronged was a British subject—proof which was never forthcoming; and he reminded the Consul that the Government did not profess to afford protection to British subjects who chose to establish themselves among savage tribes remote from our stations. Commodore Richards' scruples, however, were allayed, and he went with British vessels to the spot and gave instructions to Commander Romilly, of the *Boadicea*, to carry into effect the vote of the four European residents. Commander Romilly proceeded accordingly to the town of King Jack with a party of 140 officers and men; no opposition was offered to their landing. The exploit was described in Commander Romilly's report to the Admiralty. The town comprised 300 well-built huts, some with two storeys, and forming a quadrangle. The town was burned down, many canoes were destroyed, the banana trees cut down, and the crops also destroyed. Not satisfied with working this amount of havoc, a detachment was sent three-quarters of a mile along the coast to burn down another village. The Admiralty telegraphed to ask the reason for the burning down of that village, and it was alleged that the people there had been concerned in the seizure of the man who had been taken prisoner."

one of the highest value. Mr Henry Richard, who was supported by sixty-four votes out of a hundred and thirty-six—a division scarcely less significant than the one in which the same hon. member, some eight years previously, had gained an actual majority for a motion in favour of international arbitration—moved the House of Commons to declare “that the power claimed and exercised by the representatives of this country in various parts of the world to contract engagements, annex territories, and make war in the name of the nation without authority from the central Government is opposed to the principles of the British Constitution, is at variance with recognised rules of international law, and is fraught with danger to the honour and true interests of the country.”

As Mr Richard said, in support of his motion, although at the present time, according to the theory of the Constitution, the power of peace or war is vested in the sovereign—that is to say in the Cabinet, yet there are many who believe that this is a dangerous departure from former policy. There was a time when the consent of the great council of the nation and afterwards of Parliament had to be obtained, and was necessary, to a war or a treaty. The question really was, to use Mr Richard’s own words, “whether this great nation was to be master of its own destinies, or whether every petty officer, dressed in a little brief authority, should be at liberty to pledge the blood and treasure of thirty-two millions of people to any extent at the impulse of his own pride, resentment, or caprice. If it was found unwise to allow the colonies to drag the country into war, how much more necessary was it to curb individual officers and prevent their forcing the nation into violence and bloodshed.”

Mr Gladstone officially opposed this motion, and mainly on the ground that if it were passed it must remain inoperative until followed up by other and distinct acts, very difficult to accomplish, and implying in their character a very notable development of national policy. The practical advocates of the principles laid down in Mr Richard's motion would not, of course, contest this statement: they would say, "By all means let us recognise what our motion involves; and let us press it all the more strenuously because its adoption will commit us to further action." But Mr Gladstone knew too well the impossibility of going before the natural development of public opinion. However much he may have sympathised with the motion in the abstract, he could not as Prime Minister assent to it, because he would in so doing have committed himself and his colleagues to a change of system which could not have been brought about. Nevertheless there are some passages in his speech so full of significance in respect of the development which has actually been made in our national system of policy that they may be looked upon as a valuable aid to the comprehension of our subject.*

In them Mr Gladstone shows that the diminished control of Parliament over our foreign officials, through the Executive Government of the day, must be attributed to the greater publicity of Parliamentary debates, and to the speed with which the proceedings of the two Houses are conveyed to all who care to know them, enemy and friend alike. It is evident that disadvantage may on some occasions arise from the discussion in an open Parliament of matters relating to war or peace, or of treaty engagements. It might be urged that the advantages of such a regulation would outweigh the disadvan-

* See Appendix, J.

tages ; and certainly if previous discussion by the popular delegates were indispensable for the ratification of every international agreement the people would at any rate be able to guard itself from unsatisfactory and discreditable undertakings, and would have itself alone to thank for such as might actually be fixed upon it.

Manifestly the value of such a rule would increase with the increasing democratic vigour of the people, with its ability to keep itself clear of wars and entanglements, with its moral force over itself and its neighbours, and with its repudiation of underhand dealings. The more independently a nation holds itself, in act and pledge, amongst the other nations of the world, and the more clearly it is understood to confine itself to peaceful purposes and ends, the less cause it will have to trouble itself about the publicity of its deliberations in Parliament, and the better it will be able to transfer from the Cabinet to the national assembly matters touching its most important foreign relations. But there are few if any democracies which have attained such a position as this. The foreign affairs of the United States are entrusted to a Committee which deliberates more or less privately—and in all cases more privately than the open Senate.

England of course is very far from being in a condition to discuss all the concerns of her extended empire publicly and without reserve. Even if all other difficulties were removed she could not avoid setting the continental Powers against her, one and all, by submitting their proposals to be canvassed in Parliament, and pulled to pieces in the newspapers next morning. The consequence would be that the foreign Courts would treat with us as seldom and as superficially as possible ; and England cannot afford, until very considerable changes

have taken place, to be thus held diplomatically at arm's length by her allies. Our methods of diplomacy, in fact—which are the methods of civilised States generally—are amongst the last things with which the nation could dispense in any new departure; and this for the simple reason that they are not entirely our own creation, and do not depend exclusively upon our approval. We must in some degree be governed in secret council, and be at the mercy of individual discretion, even after we have throned a moral public opinion in matters relating to war and peace, to treaties and conventions, to aggressions and annexations. We must allow Cabinets and single Ministers to guide our destinies, and commit us to particular courses long after we have made it virtually impossible for them to play fast and loose with despots, or to obstruct the path of rising nationalities.

But it is a fair question whether Mr Gladstone, in the speech already cited, has conceded as much authority to the popular representatives as these might safely and serviceably exercise. No annexation, he says, is valid until it is ratified at home—"unless it was done in pursuance of authority from home." But whose authority? If it was by the authority of a Minister or of the whole Cabinet would this suffice to make the annexation valid even as a matter of theory? It would not suffice in practice, for public opinion at home can always demand the reversal of the act, as in the case of the Transvaal. The objections which exist to giving the people a power of reversal over treaty obligations in general do not exist where the question is one of annexation. In respect of the making of war it is no doubt impossible, as Mr Gladstone says, to take adequate security. We must rely to a great extent on the control of agents by the Executive, on the control of the Executive by Parliament,

on the just representation of the people in Parliament, and on the clarification and elevation of popular opinion. But at the same time, and even at the present day, is it not just and reasonable to ask that at any rate Parliament shall be the virtual declarer of war—the voice to say whether a declaration shall or shall not be given? It is practically too late for Parliament to interfere after a royal address has been brought down to announce that the irrevocable step has been taken; yet surely it is due to the people, and they may justly demand, that they shall be the last and the final tribunal to decide on war before the matter has been carried beyond their control. If the making of war and peace be a royal prerogative, yet it is competent to Parliament to declare that it ought to be so no longer; and it is not probable that any incumbent of the royal office in England would spontaneously, as a point of principle, and persistently decline to assent to the change.

As for all other inconveniences, we may make comparatively light of them. With resolution and moral courage it may be found that the disadvantages usually predicted as being likely to ensue from the attribution of the war-making power to the popular representatives would disappear in practice, or would appear as positive advantages. For instance, it would be no disadvantage but an occurrence of the best possible character if, after the “proconsuls,” or the ambassadors, or the court, or the Foreign and other Cabinet Ministers had been for some time helplessly drifting, or blundering, or mischief-making (and all these things are unfortunately possible) until for them at least there seemed to be no conceivable outlet and issue but war—after the spending Departments had been set to work and the newspapers had been reporting hostile utterances from both ends of the

entanglement—the calm voice of Parliament could intervene with a blank refusal to fight. It is easy to imagine all that might be said in such a case by the organs of the party which happened to be in a minority ; but the heaviest of all their charges would not tell a featherweight against the grand moral triumph and the vast practical benefit of an action of this kind.

And would it be at all different in principle from our late repudiation of injustice in the Transvaal ? Would it not be a mere extended demonstration of the national resolve to make a new departure in our policy towards other States—which is, in other terms, to ourselves ? To repeat a familiar comparison, an Englishman is not now considered a poltroon, as he once was, for refusing to fight a duel ; and when public opinion is riper—or perhaps this very day if public opinion were duly consulted—the nation of Englishmen would not lose caste or credit in the world by declining an unnecessary appeal to arms. But it is first indispensable that we should have the final issue in our own hands. An individual cannot place his quarrel at the discretion of seconds and then refuse to abide by their decision. But it is neither for the dignity nor for the advantage of a nation to give its honour and supreme interests into the keeping of one man or of one Cabinet, however shrewd this Minister or Cabinet may be.

The principle of restitution, illustrated in the evacuation of Afghanistan and the withdrawal from the Transvaal, is a novel but not an absolutely new development of English policy. Nothing more striking than the two facts just mentioned had ever been known in our history. Though we had made over the Ionian Islands to

the Greeks some twenty years before, this was not a restoration of ill-gotten possessions, and it was not done in the teeth of any serious opposition at home. We had indeed made other restitutions, after war, and more or less on compulsion; but in the case of Afghanistan and the Transvaal the basis of the act was not a battle or a popular rising. The true basis was a mandate from the English people to its representatives in Parliament, and to a Government selected from the ranks of the majority. The people, speaking through an educated public opinion, through politicians on the platform, through the newspaper press, and finally through the ballot-boxes, had declared its will that these two countries should, at any cost, and in spite of any misconception of motive, be restored to their rightful owners. If it might have been, it would have pleased Englishmen to see the double restitution made on the morrow of the general election; but the time chosen for the complete fulfilment of the national mandate was manifestly determined on the responsibility of the Executive Government. The nation had no ready means of hastening this fulfilment, but such means as it had were employed. It is necessary to recall this fact for the behoof of those who tell us that the acts of restitution were disastrous, and who argue from thence that all acts of a similar character are likely to be disastrous. The victories of Ayoub Khan and of the Boers might not have been won over English soldiers if the evacuations could have taken place as the first bold and significant measures of the Government in 1880. At any rate the discredit of the Transvaal War might have been avoided in this way. It is probable enough, as already admitted, that the delays were not merely excusable but inevitable, and that Mr Gladstone's Cabinet, or the departments presided

over by Lord Hartington and Lord Kimberley, did the utmost which was practicable in the circumstances. But it should be fully and fairly understood that the English people, and the principle of the new departure in our English policy, are not accountable for the unhappy conditions which attended these magnanimous retrocessions.

Less novel and startling in its nature was the performance of the popular behests in Europe. The principle on which Englishmen desired to see the Eastern Question laid to rest was a principle which had been constantly and studiously impressed upon them for several years past by Mr Gladstone; but, though unfamiliar from long disuse, it was in reality a principle which had been often previously applied in Europe, and which had almost always produced excellent results.

It was the policy of international concert—the unselfish agreement of all the European Powers for a defined and beneficent object—on which the people now relied for the satisfaction of their responsibilities in Turkey. And the effectual resumption of this policy in 1880, immediately after a period of isolation and discord, may reasonably be considered as an element of the new departure which Englishmen have thought fit to take.

As the popular mandate in Asia and Africa had been restitution, so the mandate of the constituencies in regard to Europe was that the Liberal Government should endeavour to unite all the Great Powers in a resolute and harmonious effort to exact the obedience of Turkey, and to ensure the freedom of her subjects. The popular sentiment in this case was the offspring of the

popular traditions transmitted from generation to generation. The principle was old—the application only was to be new. The argument of the friends of international concert in 1880, at the moment when Mr Gladstone's Cabinet were attempting to put it in operation, was of this kind. It was at last possible to assure ourselves that the instincts which had guided us during the past few years, and which had induced us to confide our destinies to a Liberal Government, were about to be justified by results. A policy without ambiguity and without cunning deflections, a policy transparent to all the world, was on the eve of being carried into effect. There was no longer the possibility of great and sudden surprises; we were no longer to be kept on the tenter-hooks of suspense lest at a moment's notice we should be found to have new responsibilities, and to have entered upon new zigzags and declivities of intrigue. Every student of history could write out the principles on which our policy rests, and the reasons by which it is to be supported. Every candid and intelligent man could work it out from the axioms of morality and politics, and could prove that, when scrupulously applied, it cannot fail to be successful. The policy of concert is simply the management of international relations according to fixed laws of human action, which are as absolute and as sacred in the dealings of State with State as they are in the dealings of individuals. The chief necessity is to be honest and straightforward, to desire the general good, and to work for it by justifiable means. If the Great Powers would all have faith in the efficacy of this rational method, and would use it frankly and unanimously, half the trouble which arises amongst the nations of the world would be abolished at a stroke, and the happiness of the human race would be incalcul-

ably increased. But as we cannot yet hope for such a consummation, and as the conflicting interests of the Powers must always keep them more or less selfishly apart, it follows that some nations must be more ready than others to enter into concert; and, as a rule, it will be the most unselfish nations of all which will propose special concerts for special purposes. As a further natural consequence, it follows that the concert of nations, when attained, must depend for its continuance upon the energy, the good intentions, the moral influence of the Power which has brought it into existence. The concerts which have been established by England have mostly possessed the same general characteristics; and it is possible to read the features of the concert of 1880 in the light of the best concerts of former epochs. The prevailing sentiments of the English people with regard to foreign nations is a desire to see rising nationalities in various parts of the world acquire the means of freedom and self-government—not solely for the benefit of the struggling races themselves, but because the extension of the limits of freedom is obviously the best guarantee of liberty and prosperity for all. It is for these objects that the wisest English statesmen in past times have invited the concert of the Great Powers, and never for the oppression or retardation of liberty.

If such boastings and aspirations as these were too confident and crude, if Englishmen flattered themselves too much on the achievements of the past and the possibilities of the future, it must be admitted that they had been encouraged to do so by their political guides and teachers. And they were in some measure justified by what the Liberal Government was actually able to accomplish within its first year of office. It was Mr Gladstone, Earl Granville, the Marquis of Hartington,

and the section of Liberals which Mr Bright and Mr Chamberlain represented in the Cabinet, who had inspired the English democracy with a belief in the efficacy of a moral and humane diplomacy ; and it was for them to prove, when in office, that their methods would suffice to insure success. Much depended on the manner in which the new policy of England in the Eastern Question was to be set before the Powers, and to be carried out in practice. There was to be in this case no restitution, and no actual undoing of arrangements and engagements entered into by the late Government, but the invitation of the continental courts to a friendly compact, in place of the reservations and distinctions which had hitherto been maintained between England and her nominal allies, was doubtless in some sense a withdrawal from an occupied position, which required infinite delicacy of procedure. It would have been easy to give the Powers an impression that we were weak, irresolute, vacillating, or at the mercy of an unskilled democracy, and that the whole responsibility and blame of our fickleness rested upon the Government of Mr Gladstone. We should thus have lost prestige, and have been less considered in the councils of Europe—not merely less relied upon, but less respected for strength and firmness.

England however was happy at this moment in being served by a Foreign Secretary and an Under-Foreign Secretary both well adapted for the task in hand. The tact and suavity of the one combined with the skill and minute attention of the other anticipated or removed every obstacle to success, and it became possible before the new Government had been six months in office to arrange a course of proceeding, based upon international concert, for the solution of the outstanding difficulties.

The problem was to obtain from the Porte the discharge of its unfulfilled obligations under the Treaty of Berlin. Nearly two years had passed since the ratification of that instrument, and still the claims of Greece and Montenegro were unsatisfied. The English Cabinet rightly thought that it was not for the advantage or dignity of Europe that the Sultan should continue to evade his responsibilities, and that two countries which had nominally profited by the Treaty should be indefinitely baulked of their rights. It was on this basis, in strict conformity with and fulfilment of the Treaty of 1878, that Lord Granville invited the Powers to renew their efforts for the settlement of the question ; and there can be no doubt that our Foreign Office was acting on this occasion strictly as the representative and executor of the national will of England. On both questions—in the case of Greece perhaps more distinctly than in the case of Montenegro—public opinion had been lucidly expressed, and most of the Ministers who obtained power in consequence of the general election of 1880 stood deeply committed to the cause of the Greeks and Montenegrins.

As the rights of Montenegro had been more formally defined in the Treaty of Berlin than the rights of Greece, and as there was moreover less jealousy and complication in the former case than in the latter, the action of the Powers was directed in the first instance to securing the rectification of the Montenegrin frontier. One of the first steps taken by the six Governments after they had consented to act in concert was to sign, according to precedent in such matters, a self-denying protocol, binding them to a disinterested co-operation in the work which they had undertaken. In the terms of this protocol the Governments, “in order to prove the entire

disinterestedness with which they pursue the execution of all the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin, undertake not to seek, in any arrangements which may be come to in consequence of their concerted action for the execution of the said Treaty in regard to the Montenegrin question, and eventually the Greek question, any augmentation of territory, any exclusive influence, or any commercial advantage for their subjects which those of every other nation may not equally obtain." The engagement in this formal instrument was of the essence of the undertaking entered into by the Powers, and it served to place the whole proceedings on an entirely different footing from the partial combinations for less unselfish objects which had in former times existed between two or more States of the European community. Whilst a similar instrument might be employed by the members of such a partial combination, no international concert of the whole community could be formed without it. It is the specific act which binds the contracting parties together, stamps the character of their agreement, and adds to it a sanction which nothing else could so effectually give. If it is not alone sufficient to ensure the disinterestedness of the Powers, and to prevent them from seeking exclusive gains, it places the strongest moral obstacles in the way of a self-seeking policy, whether on the part of the concert or on the part of single States.

The rights of Montenegro were not secured until something more than the formal agreement of the Great Powers had been manifested to the Porte. The Naval Demonstration, and, beyond that, a threat to send the combined fleet for a special purpose to Smyrna, at length brought the obstinacy of the Turkish Government to an end, and Dulcigno was ceded to the Montenegrins early

in the month of December. The employment by the Powers of their ships of war, and their menace of a forcible intervention at Smyrna, were acts of virtual hostility sufficiently justified by international law, by precedent, by the necessities of the case, and by the antecedent conduct of Turkey. At any rate, not to go behind the general relations between the Porte and Europe as illustrated and defined in the Treaty of Berlin, they were as fully justified as the conclusion of that Treaty itself, which had been ratified by the Sultan. If it was within the right of Europe, technical or moral, to conclude that Treaty, it was certainly within her right to exact obedience to it. It has been said that Turkey had had abundant and recent precedents for the evasion of an obnoxious treaty; and in fact it may be admitted that she would have had as much right to evade the Treaty of Berlin, if she had been able, as some of the Great Powers had had to shake off inconvenient restrictions. But this is an admission which proves its converse—namely, that the Powers had the right of the strongest to exact obedience to a clear and definite international engagement.

The general subject of European concert is better exemplified in the recent history of the Greek question, which was more protracted, and gave more frequent occasion for the interchange of diplomatic correspondence, than any other matter arising out of the Eastern problem. It will therefore be interesting to review this question in greater detail.

XI.

THE EUROPEAN CONCERT.

(1880-1.)

THE Greek question of 1880-1 had its origin in the same causes which produced the Slavonic risings of 1875-76, and the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78. The misgovernment of the Hellenic provinces of Turkey had kept Epirus, Thessaly, and Crete in a state of chronic insurrection for years before the Russian invasion; and when the subjects of King George impelled their Government to prepare for action in 1877 and 1878 they were only seizing upon an opportunity for which they had been long and impatiently waiting.

In 1877, before the Russians had crossed the Danube, there seemed to be a probability that Greece would throw herself into the struggle. The Porte, at any rate, saw reason to fear this, and called upon the English Government to restrain its neighbour from hostile measures. The appeal was successful. On the 9th of June our representative at Athens wrote to the Earl of Derby, then Foreign Minister, in these terms:—"M. Trikoupis undertakes to go beyond the international duties which can strictly be required of Greece, and to endeavour to prevent outbreaks in the neighbouring provinces, upon condition of obtaining a promise from Great Britain that when the time comes for entering upon negotiations for peace, over which Her Majesty's

Government may be expected to exercise considerable control, it will be considered *that there is an Hellenic question before Europe*, no less than if such an Hellenic question had been raised by the actual insurrection of all the Hellenic provinces.”*

Lord Derby replied, on the 2nd of July, that Her Majesty's Government were “ready to assure the Greek Government that, so far as might lie in their power, they would, when the time came for the consideration of the settlement of the questions arising out of the war, be ready to use their best influence to secure for the Greek population in the Turkish provinces any administrative reforms or advantages which may be conferred upon the Christian population of any other race.”

This was not quite as much as the Greeks asked for ; but it was a virtual admission that the Greek question existed, and an absolute promise that England would do her best to solve it. Moreover, there is ground for asserting that pledges of a more distinct and unreserved character were at the same time verbally given at Athens.

In August, the Greeks were vehemently agitated by fresh outrages in Epirus and Thessaly, and by the apparent collapse of the Turkish resistance to Russia ; and the Government were unable to prevent a few volunteers from crossing the frontier. The Porte once more applied the lever of English influence, and once more Greece restrained herself in deference to our mediation. The same process was repeated towards the end of the year.

In February 1878, when the Russian terms of peace had been dictated to Turkey, and Greece saw herself almost entirely neglected in the proposed arrangement, a

* Blue Book ; “ Turkey, No. 19, 1878.”

Greek force actually entered the Turkish dominions ; but it was at once recalled, on the urgent representations of more than one of the Great Powers. M. Deligianni, who had succeeded M. Trikoupis at the Foreign Office, addressed a Circular Note to the Powers, affirming that this fresh act of self-restraint was inspired by "perfect confidence" in the "promise of the Great Powers" that "the national aspirations and interests of the Greek population in Turkey should become the object of the deliberations of the approaching Congress ;" and at the same time he put forward a request for "the special representation of Greek aspirations." The Greeks were allowed to nourish their hopes, their demand for representation at the Congress was entertained, and Lord Derby repeated the assurance which he had given on the 2d of July.

We have here a distinct moral compact between England and Greece—a compact in which the Greeks pledged their vital interests and their dearest ambitions on the faith of an English promise. Our word as a nation was passed. As a nation, we had a right to expect that it should be kept, and not broken.

During the Spring of 1878, and whilst negotiations were proceeding between the Great Powers with a view to the holding of a Congress, first at Vienna and afterwards at Berlin, the English Government consistently maintained the claim of Greece to state her case before the plenipotentiaries. Lord Derby was loyal to his undertaking, and when he quitted the Foreign Office the difficulty was already virtually overcome. The despatch with which his successor, Lord Salisbury, signalled his assumption of his new post gave us no reason to suppose that Greece had specially suffered by the change, and the champions of the Hellenic cause looked forward

to the Congress with some hope, if not entirely without misgiving.

The first transactions at Berlin were calculated to give satisfaction in a very high degree to the Greeks and their friends. In England, at any rate, there was no little astonishment at the fervid and enthusiastic manner in which the Marquis of Salisbury maintained the pretensions of Hellenism, and backed them against the claims of the clients of Russia. The rights of the Greek populations in Epirus and Thessaly, in Macedonia, Thrace, and Crete, were brought prominently to the front ; and the undue preponderance which Russia had sought to give to the Slavs was opposed, not in the interest of the Mahomedans, or on the plea of Turkish "independence and integrity," but expressly on behalf of the Hellenic race. "The Slavs," Lord Salisbury said at the second sitting, "have as their defender in this room a powerful military nation, related to them by blood and by faith, strong in the prestige of its recent victories. The Greeks, on the contrary, have as their representative here no nation of the same race. Her Majesty's Government is of opinion that the decisions taken under such circumstances would not content the Greek race, and, consequently, would not promote either the tranquillity of the Ottoman Empire or the peace of Europe."

The justice and the warmth of this advocacy were, to a large extent, though not altogether, successful ; and the Greek plenipotentiaries prepared themselves to argue the case of their oppressed fellow-countrymen before the Congress. How did it happen, after this, that an "Eastern Roumelia" was fantastically carved out of what Lord Salisbury called the "Greek provinces" of Turkey without so much as consulting the representatives of King George ? How did it come to pass that

these representatives were subsequently told to confine themselves to the case of Thessaly and Epirus, were snubbed for trying to do what Lord Salisbury had demanded that they should be allowed to do, and were taunted with "mistaking the intentions of Europe?" Students of history yet unborn may perhaps ask these questions with even a deeper sense of wonder than we are able to feel in the present generation. The records of diplomacy offer few more striking instances of incongruity and tergiversation.

It was due in some measure to M. Waddington that Greece was prevented from taking any part in deciding the fate of Eastern Roumelia. The English plenipotentiaries must bear alone the responsibility of diminishing the modest minimum of France, and of hindering the emancipation of millions of Greeks when it was in their power to secure it. On the 29th of June, at the ninth sitting, M. Deligianni and M. Rhangabe had their first and last audience of the Congress. They argued the matter from every point of view, in the interests of the Greeks of the two provinces, in the interests of Greece, in the interests of Europe, and in the interests of Turkey itself. They proved to demonstration as much as Russia had proved for Bulgaria, as much as all the plenipotentiaries had admitted in the case of Eastern Roumelia, and as much as Lord Salisbury had by implication admitted in the case of the "Greek provinces" generally. That which they said was notoriously true, supported by notorious facts, and they were justified in expecting that their championship would prevail.

Let us see how the affair stood at this moment. It had been established that Epirus and Thessaly were in the same miserable plight as Bulgaria, Bosnia, and

Roumelia. The indictment had been drawn up, irrefragable testimony had been adduced, the plaintiffs' advocates had conducted their case with complete efficiency. All that remained to be done was for the bench to give its decision; and it was prepared to decide according to the merits. But before it could do so one of the judges, solemnly pledged to deliver a righteous judgment, and having already committed himself in eloquent terms to the very principles on which the plaintiffs' advocates had relied, suddenly turned round, and gave his opinion entirely against the weight of the evidence. He declared himself adversely to the plaintiffs, and by his firm attitude and obstinate persistence succeeded in wresting the judgment of the court in favour of the wrongdoer.

This is what Greece, and the friends of Greece, were driven to regard as the attitude of England at the Berlin Congress, and especially at the sitting recorded in the 13th Protocol, when the emancipation of the Porte's Greek subjects was limited—and that only by way of a vague recommendation—to the southern half of Thessaly and Epirus. It had been hoped that the whole of these two provinces, with Crete and possibly Macedonia, would have been rescued from Turkish misrule. This was clearly foreshadowed by Lord Derby, and subsequently by Lord Salisbury, in the name of Her Majesty's Government. It had been further hoped that the frontier of the Hellenic kingdom would have been extended so as to include the dense Greek populations whereof Janina and Larissa are the centres. This was the least that could be expected from the plenipotentiaries after the opinions which they had expressed in the earlier meetings of the Congress, and after the liberal manner in which they had treated the Danubian

Principalities, and the provinces of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia.

So far as the Congress is concerned, this is what the Greek nation and race obtained from it. In Roumelia, a large Hellenic population was bound up with a larger Slavonic population, to the detriment of both. With regard to Crete, a Turkish promise was accepted as covering the necessities of the case. With regard to Thessaly and Epirus (in the words of the 13th Protocol), "the Congress invites the Sublime Porte to come to an understanding with Greece for a rectification of frontiers;" and "is of opinion that this rectification might 'follow the valleys'" of the Salamvrias and Kalamas; whilst "at the same time the Powers are prepared to offer their direct mediation to the two parties." And, lest Greece should presume too much on the "invitation" and "opinion" of the plenipotentiaries, Prince Bismarck subsequently assured the Turkish plenipotentiaries that "the paragraph in question expressed a desire of the Congress, and not a resolution in which the Porte was asked to concur."

Greece had come to Berlin asking for the recognition of a just claim. She was sent away with an opinion and a desire. It was impossible that either she or her friends should look upon this as fair and generous treatment. The champions of the Hellenic cause at once recognised that, as far as they were concerned, the issue of the Congress was chimerical in the extreme.

Englishmen had more reason than other people to regret this outcome of the Congress, and to criticise the mode in which the disappointment was brought about. It is matter of history, which no one has seriously attempted to deny, that the two plenipotentiaries of this country, and Lord Beaconsfield in particular, were per-

sonally responsible for the overthrow of the hopes of Greece. Sir Charles Dilke stated the leading facts in connection with England's change of attitude at Berlin in the course of the Parliamentary debate on the Treaty, shortly after the return of the Premier and Foreign Secretary. "What," he asked, "had happened between the ninth and thirteenth sittings of the Congress? After the ninth sitting M. Waddington had been charged by his colleagues with the duty of studying the Greek proposals, and formulating a resolution to be submitted to the Congress. His first resolution had been for the annexation of the whole of Thessaly and Epirus to Greece. The proposal was supported privately by Italy, and even by Austria herself. It was not opposed by Germany and Russia, yet it had to be abandoned on account of the resistance which it met with from somewhere. M. Waddington thus fell back on the territorial limits which are mentioned in the Protocol, but proposed a definite and settled annexation. This met with decided opposition from the English delegates; and on the very morning of the sitting which was to decide the case of Greece, M. Waddington had an anxious but fruitless interview with Lord Beaconsfield, and pointed out in how hard a position he was placed by those who had asked him to formulate a resolution on the subject of the Greek demands, and who then opposed his minimised proposal, which was in fact their own. The result of the opposition of the English delegates was the proposal of the resolution in such a form that it found no place as a resolution in the Treaty."

Thus it appears that Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury, after they had gone to Berlin pledged to do their best for Greece, after they had secured the representation of the Hellenic kingdom in the Congress, and after Lord

Salisbury had pointedly set up the Hellenic claims in opposition to the claims of the Slavs, ended by reducing these claims to "an irreducible minimum," and declining to make even the slightest mention of them except in such a form that Prince Bismarck contemptuously spoke of them as a mere "desire" of the Congress. Before we pass on to consider what has been the effect and the sequel of this desire, it is necessary to refer to something of a still graver character, which cannot be treated as an incontrovertible fact, like all the foregoing statements, but which at least amounts to a serious and pertinent suspicion. It is certainly difficult to avoid the conclusion that the cause of Greece was sacrificed at Berlin to the interests of another country—that the broken pledges of English statesmen were the extravagant price which we had to pay for the acquisition of Cyprus.

Mr Shaw Lefevre, referring to this suspicion at a meeting at Willis's Rooms, convened by the Greek Committee in May 1879, said:—"It is my belief that when the dates of these transactions are carefully compared, this is the only possible solution of the matter. It was on the 29th of June that the Greeks obtained a hearing in the Congress; the Anglo-Turkish Convention was signed by the Grand Vizier on the 1st of July, and the Treaty was finally ratified on the 4th of July; on the 4th of July, at Berlin, a proposition was made to postpone to the next day the consideration of the Greek question; and it was on the 5th of July—the very day after the ratification of the Anglo-Turkish Convention—that the question of what should be done with Greece came on for decision before the Congress of Berlin. Putting these dates together, we cannot but come to the conclusion that the interval was occupied by Sir H.

Layard in negotiating the Anglo-Turkish Convention, under which Cyprus was handed over, and that as a consideration for this the cause of Greece was to be abandoned by England."

This evidence, if not exactly such as would carry conviction in a court of law, will probably be strong enough to convince most people, now and in succeeding generations, that the statesmen who professedly regarded British interests (real and supposed) as paramount over all other considerations did abandon the cause of Greece at Berlin for the sake of Cyprus.

The effect produced upon the Porte by the expression of Europe's opinions and desires at Berlin was soon made manifest. The thirteenth sitting of the Congress was held on the 5th of July. On the 13th orders were given at Constantinople to increase the army in Thessaly by 10,000 men, whilst a squadron under Manthorpe Bey was despatched to Volos. On the 17th, the Greek Government invited the Turkish Government to appoint Commissioners for the regulation of the new frontier; but on the 20th, after the subject had been discussed on several occasions by the Ministers of the Sultan, it was decided not to give up any territory to Greece, and not to comply with the wishes of Europe. Safvet Pasha declared to Sir H. Layard that this decision was final, and authorised him to communicate the fact to the English Government. No one can be surprised at this resolution on the part of Turkey. If she could not resist the Russians in Roumelia, and if she could not hope to exclude the Austrians from Bosnia, she was at least able to baulk the expectations of Greece; and it was natural that she should at once resolve to do so.

Every statesman in Europe must have perceived that the decision of the Porte was definitive, and, as far as the Sultan and his Ministers were concerned, irrevocable. Without pressure of some kind or another it was certain that Turkey would not come to terms with Greece, and the Greeks were, therefore, fully justified in urging that Europe should forthwith proceed to the mediation which it had declared itself ready to offer. But the Powers showed then, as some of them showed on subsequent occasions, that they were by no means in a hurry to see the Berlin Treaty fulfilled.

The conduct of the Greek Government after the Congress was both legitimate and dignified. Greece endeavoured to hasten the accomplishment of her hopes, and she was certainly not to blame for that. If anything, she erred on the side of patience, of complaisance to the Powers which had left her in the lurch, and of meekness under the intolerable delays of the Porte. She did not attempt to take by violence the territory which Europe wished her to receive, nor did she in any other way seek to deviate from the path of procedure marked out for her at Berlin.

The invitation sent by Greece to Turkey on the 17th of July remained without the slightest acknowledgment. On the 8th of August Safvet Pasha sent round to the Powers an elaborate Circular Note, showing cause why their advice should not be followed by the Porte. In September Greece renewed her request for mediation, without effect; but at last, on the 21st of October, M. Waddington addressed a despatch to the Governments of the Great Powers, suggesting that the time had now arrived for acting on the 24th Article of the Treaty. His proposal was that the six Powers should ask the Porte to give its explicit adhesion to the principle

of a rectification, and should consent to name Commissioners.

Five of the Powers at once frankly accepted this proposal ; but Lord Salisbury demurred to its form, regarded it as a menace to Turkey, considered the time "inopportune" for such a step, and regretted that the Powers had not "thought fit to delay" it. A month after the date of M. Waddington's despatch Lord Salisbury formally replied, in a long plea for Turkish interests,* assenting to the mediation on condition that Greece should be "invited in return to give the Porte security in the future against the claims which have often threatened the peaceable relations of the two Powers in the past." The plenipotentiary who had startled the Congress five months before by his bold assertion of the Hellenic rights, even in Macedonia and Thrace, now spoke of the transaction as a "mutual act of pacification," and complained that Greece had "made no corresponding offer" on her own part.

On the 15th of December the Turkish Government agreed to name Commissioners. Then followed the farce which was described by Sir Charles Dilke at the meeting in Willis's Rooms already referred to, by which the Porte contrived to throw fresh delays in the way of the Conference. "On the 31st of December the Turks named as the place for the first meeting of the Commissioners a village which they described as Khoukhout, near Narda, a village for which the Greeks sought in vain upon their maps. On the 1st of January the Greeks accepted the proposal, but they stated that they were unable to discover Khoukhout. On the 19th of January, after again a great deal of delay, the Turks explained that Khoukhout meant Anino. On the 20th

* Blue Book ; "Greece, No. 1, 1879."

the Greeks replied that there was no village there, but they were so anxious to begin negotiations that they would send up Commissioners at once, in what they believed to be the direction that was intended. The Greek Commissioners sailed in the ship *Olga*, on the 20th of January, for the Gulf of Arta. At the entrance of the Gulf a shot was fired, and they were stopped, and the Porte protested in a note to Athens against their 'inconvenient promptitude.' On the 25th of the same month the place of meeting was changed to Prevesa, and on the 26th the Greeks accepted it, and sent up their Commissioners in the King's yacht *Amphitrite*. The *Amphitrite* again was fired upon and stopped, and the Turks again protested. The first meeting only took place on the 5th of February."

The Conference at Prevesa came to nothing, because the Turks refused to take the Congress line as a basis of negotiations. On the 20th of March 1879, the Greek Commissioners were recalled, and on the following day M. Deligianni repeated the appeal for European mediation. Again M. Waddington was the first to respond. On the 21st of April he addressed a Note to the Powers, in which he suggested that direct mediation should be employed by means of a Conference of the Ambassadors at Constantinople. To this proposal the German Government gave an immediate and specially cordial assent; but the Governments of Austria and Italy reflected the views of England on the subject, which were to the effect that the Ambassadors should act independently, and not in concert. This, of course, practically disposed of the idea that the Ambassadors, as representing an European concert, might have exercised a salutary influence over the new Commissioners whom Turkey and Greece were invited to appoint. The Commissioners

were named ; but, as the European concert did not exist in any effective sense, the influence of the Ambassadors was hardly more than nominal.

On the 12th of June Lord Salisbury wrote to Sir Henry Layard a long despatch, setting forth in a fair and candid style the reasons which should induce Turkey to come to terms with Greece. In this despatch the action of the Ambassadors was spoken of as though it was to be the principal instrument in securing the compliance of the Porte, and Sir H. Layard received his instructions in that sense. But we know the result of this second Conference. We know that Greece entered upon it without hope, because the Porte refused beforehand to accept the recommendations of the Congress as binding. We know that the discussions were fruitless, that there was no real effort to arrive at an understanding, and that the delays of the Turks were as truculent, if not quite so frivolous, as those adopted six months before. We know that the consent of the Powers in June remained fruitless until the following November, and that the meetings of the Commissioners between the 17th of November and the 29th of December were only a series of make-believes and equivocations on the part of the Sultan's Government. And we know that, throughout this long and discreditable six months, whilst the representatives of Greece were being tricked and befooled at Constantinople, the Ambassadors of the six Great Powers were either unwilling or unable to bring the slightest effectual pressure to bear upon the Porte.

Remembering that this Conference was the result of a nominal mediation of the Powers, in accordance with the 24th Article of the Treaty of Berlin, and that the Ambassadors really did receive instructions to act in consultation with each other, we must regard this new

failure as a defeat of the Powers in detail, a rejection of the advice of Europe, a diplomatic fiasco of the worst kind, traceable entirely to the fact that the intervention between Greece and Turkey was practically valueless. There was no concert of the Governments, no identical action on the part of the Ambassadors, and, therefore, no pressure such as the Porte was likely to feel. And why? It is painful to be obliged once more to throw the chief blame of this failure upon our own country. It was England who first refused M. Waddington's very moderate suggestion of united action. It was to the English Government that this new disappointment of the Thessalians and Epirotes was primarily due.

Such was the condition of the Greek question in the Spring of 1880, when the general election replaced the Conservative Government by a Government under the guidance of Mr Gladstone. As soon as the initial measures had been taken by our Foreign Office to establish a special concert of the Great Powers Lord Granville proposed that a Conference should meet at Berlin, in pursuance of the 24th Article of the Treaty of 1878, for the purpose of mediating between Turkey and Greece; and on the 9th of June our representative at the German capital received his instructions. Lord Granville sent on this date a despatch to Lord Odo Russell, in the course of which he said:—

“The protracted continuance of the present situation was clearly most inexpedient in the interests of both Greece and Turkey, and as it was evident that there was no prospect of the two Governments being able to come to terms if left to themselves, the French Government were of opinion that the only means of bringing the

matter to a practical conclusion was that the Commissioners to be appointed by the Powers should meet, at all events, in the first instance, at some place outside of Turkey. Her Majesty's Government considered that the purpose in view could best be secured by a Conference being summoned to meet either in Paris or Berlin, when it might be determined, by a decision of the majority, what line of frontier should be recommended for adoption, and that an International Commission composed of officers possessing technical knowledge should subsequently proceed to the locality, if it should be deemed necessary, to decide upon the details. The views of Her Majesty's Government are indicated in the instructions addressed to Mr Goschen on his proceeding to Constantinople. Her Majesty's Government wish it to be distinctly understood that while urging the completion of this rectification of frontier upon the Porte in the interests both of Turkey and Greece they desire to adhere generally to the geographical indications given in the 13th Protocol of the Congress of Berlin. They do not wish that there should be any forcible annexation to the latter country of an unwilling Mussulman population in such numbers as to be a source of danger and insecurity. On the other hand, they consider that the line should be so drawn as to relieve the Greek-speaking inhabitants so far as they are collected in a sufficiently defined district from a Government which does not satisfy their traditional sympathies and national aspirations.*

This, it is clear, was a generous, but not an unduly partial interpretation of the question at issue between Turkey and Greece. It was in very striking contrast with the attitude assumed by Lord Beaconsfield and

* Parl. Papers ; "Greece, No. 3, 1880."

Lord Salisbury, though it was entirely in harmony with the national sentiment of England, as this sentiment had been manifested during the previous eighteen months.

The rectification of the Greek frontier agreed upon by the Conference of June, 1880, was more favourable to Greece than the Powers were able to carry into effect. It may be that the goodwill of Europe towards a small and energetic State, and towards the large Greek population under Turkish rule which had so long and vainly struggled for independence, carried the plenipotentiaries beyond the mark where a cooler prudence would have caused them to arrest their steps. But on the other hand there can be no doubt that the resolutions of the Conference might have been sustained, and the question might have been settled on a more satisfactory basis, if the European concert had not grown weaker and less effective in the interval. The Porte, as was only natural, refused compliance with the demands of the Powers. It had demurred to the original meeting of the Conference, and it now demurred to the conclusions of the Conference. But this opposition might have been overcome, as the opposition to the Montenegrin settlement was overcome, by a judicious display of firmness and a timely demonstration of force. England for her part left nothing undone to obtain for the Greeks all that the Berlin Conference held out to them, and for some time the Powers continued to insist with the Porte on the definitive character of their resolutions at Berlin.

An unfortunate turn was given to the negotiations by a change of Government in France, which substituted M. Barthélemy St Hilaire for M. de Freycinet. The new Foreign Minister of France lost no time in modifying the position which his country had hitherto occupied

in regard to the Greek question. In conversation with Lord Lyons, on the 3d of October, he declared that France could take no initiative in the matter. The deliberate resolution of the Government was to adhere closely to the concert of the Six Powers, but not to take any lead themselves. "They were decidedly of opinion that the Montenegrin, Greek, and Armenian questions should now be treated as one whole ; and, in the interest of peace and harmony, they were extremely anxious that all three should be finally settled with the greatest possible promptitude by the Six Powers in concert. The French Government would carefully consider any suggestions for settling them which might be proposed to them, and would be very desirous of adopting any plan which was agreed upon by the other Powers. They must, however, state at once distinctly that they would not incur any risk of being drawn into a war. On the one hand, the French Government were, M. Barthélemy St Hilaire said, prohibited by the Constitution from making war without the consent of the Chambers ; while, on the other hand, public opinion throughout France would vehemently disapprove any action on the part of the Government which might appear to tend, however remotely or indirectly, to involve the country in hostilities."*

Recent events in Tunis afford a curious commentary on this text !

The cooling of French sympathies for Greece, or rather the modification of the part which France had played in the European concert, paralysed the action of the Great Powers, and destroyed all hope of settling the frontier dispute on terms specially favourable to the

* Lord Lyons to Earl Granville, Oct. 3, 1880. Parl. Papers ; "Greece, No. 1, 1881."

Greeks—which would have been as the English Government had thought specially favourable to the best interests of Europe. The Porte took advantage of the altered condition of affairs to decline more emphatically than ever the advice which had been given to it by the six Governments. The Ministers of the Sultan even went so far as to assume an initiative of their own by offering to enter into fresh negotiations for a rectification of the Greek frontier, on the understanding that the decisions of the Berlin Conference should be allowed to fall to the ground, or at least that they should be over-ridden by the new proposal.

Towards the end of the year 1880 the French Government—which had already been instrumental in causing the separation of the combined fleet immediately after the cession of Dulcigno—suggested that the mediation between Turkey and Greece should be converted into an arbitration. This scheme, though assented to by all the Great Powers, failed by the refusal of the Greek Government (and subsequently of the Porte) to invite or accept an arbitration.* Meanwhile Greece had not ceased to prepare herself for war. She claimed for herself the right to carry out by force of arms the resolutions of the Conference ; and only the earnest representations of the Powers withheld her from this course.

The ultimate result of the withdrawal of France was made manifest in the Spring of 1881, when a compromise was effected between the recommendations of the Powers at Berlin and the paltry rectification offered by the Porte in October 1880. The Governments,

* The proposal of arbitration by France, and the language held on the subject by the English Government, constitute an instructive chapter of diplomatic history. Three of the principal despatches will be found quoted in the Appendix (K).

anxious above all things to have the question settled, and despairing of their original scheme since their active concert had been terminated by the French Cabinet, followed up the plan of arbitration by one which was still better calculated to play into the hands of the Turks, and to defeat the hopes of the Greeks. They gave instructions to their Ambassadors at Constantinople to enter into negotiations with the Sultan's Ministers. There was, it must be confessed, nothing to be proud of in this phase of the question. Europe went to Constantinople virtually for the purpose of compromising her decisions at the Conference, and this after solemnly adjuring Turkey, with something like menace, to carry those decisions into effect. Her representatives were treated with rudeness, and were compelled in the end to accept on behalf of the Greeks a mere fragment of their claims in Epirus, with a moderate rectification in Thessaly. Greece was constrained, by very heavy pressure brought to bear upon her, to submit to this large discounting of what she had been led to expect; and so, lamely enough, the question was brought to an end.

If Europe had thus come to a weak, not to say an impotent conclusion, and had suffered the Porte to gain (at least from its own point of view) a great diplomatic triumph, it cannot fairly be argued that the policy of concert had been tried in vain. In the Montenegrin question it had been thoroughly active and operative: but even in the Greek question it must be credited with having brought about a settlement of a long-standing and delicate quarrel. If the Government of the Republic had been steady—if France, after stipulating in the first place that the combined squadron should be used on

behalf of the Greeks as soon as it had served the cause of the Montenegrins, had resolutely adhered to that line of conduct—the Powers might have been able to release Epirus, as well as Thessaly, from the rule of the Turks. We cannot be quite certain that they would have done this without landing their troops, but there was at least a reasonable hope that they might have found it possible. The retreat of the French from the position which they had originally taken up had destroyed this hope ; but, even as it was, Greece obtained what she could never have obtained without the assistance of the united Powers. The concert had endured in some form, and the consequence was that a large portion of the ancient land of Thessaly was definitively added to the Greek State.

In order to estimate fairly the service rendered to the Greeks by Europe it should be remembered that the Congress of Berlin did not absolutely bind the Powers to intervene in their favour. The six Governments did not positively and imperatively require the Porte to liberate any of its Greek subjects in the border provinces. The Treaty did not pledge those who signed it to effect a transfer of Thessaly and Epirus. All that had been done up to 1878 was to recognise and set forward the Greek claims, to express the desire and advice of Europe, and to hold out to the Greeks a prospect and a promise of assistance. But for the individual Government of England the case was a more special and urgent one than it could be for Europe as a community. No doubt it is true that the community was bound and entitled to watch over the liberties and good order of each of its component States ; and it was only on this ground that the Congress of Berlin had been justified in dealing with the subjects of Turkey, and that England in 1880 was warranted in

inviting the Powers to employ concerted action. But this country had assumed to itself a peculiar concern and interest in Greece ; the English Government, as we have seen, had taken the initiative in bringing the Hellenic cause before the Congress ; and in the year 1880, after the constituencies had given their mandate to a new Ministry, English encouragement in a still more emphatic sense had been held out to King George and to the insurgent provinces.

The responsibility thus passed on by the Government of Lord Beaconsfield to the Government of his successor, and accepted with something more than formal acquiescence by Mr Gladstone and his colleagues, was as real and as grave as any responsibility of a similar character could be ; and the history of the negotiations set on foot by the Foreign Office, from the first invitation addressed by Lord Granville to the Continental Powers up to the last discussions of the Commissioners for the transfer of the ceded territory, proves that the Liberal Government was determined to honour its engagements. The preceding Government, which had taken so notable a part in shaping the Treaty of Berlin, had not seen its way during a period of eighteen months to make good its word of promise. It had been unable to do so for the simple reason that the policy which it had pursued did not admit of an amicable agreement amongst the Powers, without which the Porte could not be induced to come to terms with Greece. But Mr Gladstone's foreign policy was based on international concert for the discharge of international obligations. As soon as he came into office he set this concert on foot ; and his initiative at once communicated to the Powers, and eventually to Turkey, the moral impetus necessary for the solution of the difficulty.

When the concert of 1880 was first spoken of and entered upon, the policy of the Liberal Government was criticised in various quarters—mainly of course by the general political opponents of Mr Gladstone and his colleagues, but occasionally, and in a modified sense, by a section of his followers. So far as the former kind of criticism calls for remark in this place, it may be said to have been based upon the alleged impossibility of effecting any great or permanent good by a pretended agreement of Powers whose aims and wishes are known to be irreconcilable. It was urged by many who had supported the so-called imperialist policy of Lord Beaconsfield and the Marquis of Salisbury that a sincere co-operation of the six Great Powers on any question affecting the problems of south-eastern Europe was in the nature of things unattainable. A pretended concert might be entered into, but it must infallibly prove to be a sham, and there could be no true mark of statesmanship in efforts put forth for the purpose of establishing it. England herself had separate interests in the East, and these would be jeopardised, if not actually sacrificed, by going into council with our rivals. Compromises would be necessary in some shape or other, and our representatives would thus be called upon to abandon the objects of English policy in exchange for whatever advantages they might gain for their client. In any case we should be using for purposes not essential to our own aims the influence and authority which ought to be reserved for occasions of real necessity. The desire to help the Greeks, or the Montenegrins, or to compel obedience from the Porte, was in great measure sentimental, and a truly patriotic Minister would not permit himself to be swayed by sentiment. Mr Gladstone might attempt his benevolent task, but the

attempt would recoil upon himself. He would receive a snub from one Power, or be out-manceuvred by another; and sooner or later he would be taught by experience that his predecessors had pursued the course most calculated to serve the interests of the country.

The critics who employed such arguments as these were encouraged in their opinion by each successive obstacle encountered by the new policy; and they hailed the fulfilment of their predictions when the ships of the Great Powers separated after the surrender of Dulcigno. But it is possible that their want of confidence in the method and their satisfaction at its supposed collapse were due to the formation of too high an estimate in the first instance of what an international concert actually is, and what it may be expected to accomplish. A concert is a mere agreement for a special purpose. So long as it lasts it may naturally produce more amicable relations amongst the concerting Powers in ordinary matters, but the special purpose will be the formal limit of the special agreement. And when this special purpose is accomplished it may be that (as in 1880-1) a better general understanding will subsist amongst the Powers; but the absence of this need not destroy the effect of the previous concert, as its attainment was not one of its defined objects. All that is necessary is that the parties to the agreement shall have fully decided beforehand on the particular end to be accomplished, and that they shall solemnly bind themselves by the usual self-denying protocol.

There is manifestly a broad distinction to be drawn between a concert of this kind and the combinations and alliances so frequently formed by our statesmen in the eighteenth century. It differed from most of them, of course, in being an association of all the Great Powers

(which practically means the whole of Europe) against a State which is scarcely to be included in the European economy. But it differed also from the vast majority of them in being an association formed in order to carry out the terms of a treaty, by a Minister beyond all cavil attached to the cause of peace and free government. Its success was menaced by the supposed—it was indeed almost rendered futile by the partial—disaccord of a single Power ; but the entire honesty of its purpose was attested by the fact that even after the dispersion of the ships in the Adriatic, and after the temporary arrest of all action by M. St Hilaire's unlooked for intervention, the Powers did persist in their unselfish efforts until they had wrung from Turkey so much as was possible without a war.

This veritable triumph of international policy must be counted to the credit of Mr Gladstone's Administration. But behind the Government of the day, inspiring their will and encouraging their efforts, we may discern the authority of the popular mandate, to which the conduct of an English Ministry must always actually or professedly conform itself, and which in 1880 had unquestionably laid down the principles whereby the course of the nation was to be guided. The new departure had been definitely taken ; the old systems had been sifted and discriminated ; and the foreign policy of England was for the first time dictated by the voice of the democracy instead of being merely based upon traditions and precedents.

The informing and directing mind in the new development of English policy, which has been lightly traced in the foregoing pages, was the mind of the statesman whose greatest triumphs have been won at home, in legislation, and in the discussion of social and economical

questions. It has sometimes been said that a democracy can have little real concern in matters of foreign policy, and that it will consequently be disposed to neglect them, to shirk the responsibilities inseparable from empire, and to insulate itself in its commercial and domestic interests. There is, perhaps, very little reason for such a charge. At any rate it is usually preferred by men who admit themselves to be opposed to democratic institutions, and we may hesitate to accept their conclusions until we have examined the grounds on which they rest. Meanwhile, it is not superfluous to point out how strongly the incidents just reviewed, and the action of Mr Gladstone throughout our recent complications, tend to rebut the assertion. The majority which saw fit to arrest and reverse Lord Beaconsfield's foreign policy, and to establish the relations of England with other countries upon an entirely different footing, was unquestionably drawn from the classes which are, or which constitute the main element of, the English democracy. And the statesman who interpreted and carried out their wishes, to whom the problems of foreign policy were all in all for something like five years, was one who had almost constantly occupied himself up to 1876 with a distinct order of subjects.

It is interesting to observe, as no one who considers the two men side by side can fail to observe, how many points of resemblance are presented by the characters and careers of Canning and Gladstone. The fact is none the less noticeable when we bear in mind the warm admiration which Mr Gladstone has frequently expressed for his predecessor, whose influence was admittedly strong upon his youthful mind, and whose example may more

than once have given shape and direction to his policy.

These two men, whose lot it was at an interval of more than half a century to rescue and confirm the better traditions of England's foreign policy, and to give satisfaction to the national conscience after a period of audacious innovation, sprang from the middle class of English society. Both received, at Eton and Christ Church, the highest education and the utmost social and intellectual refinement which it is in the power of English parents to give to their sons. Both developed early and brilliant talents, attracting notice and securing a favourable entrance into political life by their triumphs at the University. Both were elegant writers and vigorous speakers, generous in sympathies and ardent in ambition. Both began as Tories, rather by the accident of friendship and circumstance than by such force of disposition and conviction as is wont to create strict partisans.

Canning was recognised by his contemporaries as the most powerful Parliamentary orator since Pitt and Fox had held the mastery of the popular House. Mr Gladstone's contemporaries have praised his oratory with equal enthusiasm : but whilst he resembles Canning in the brilliance of a fervid genius, in the marvellous exuberance of his diction, and in his wealth of classical adornment, he has made up by moral elevation and analytic subtlety whatever he may lack of the other's poetic sentiment and playful conceits. In one remarkable feature the two men exhibited the strength of their versatile character, intellectual as well as simply rhetorical. They both dealt with figures, with statistical facts, with monetary laws and economical problems, in such a manner that their hearers were wont to consider their speeches on

these subjects as by no means the least interesting of their discourses. But the greatest charms in the eloquence of each were perhaps felt by their least cultivated hearers, who were fascinated and lifted out of themselves by the energy, the vehemence, the loftiness and grandeur with which they handled the abstract principles underlying political policy and action.

The early opposition of Canning to Catholic emancipation—which brought down upon him the lash of Peter Plymley in his letters to his brother Abraham—and the warmth with which he subsequently advocated this measure of justice remind one forcibly of Mr Gladstone's gradual convictions on the subject of the Irish Church. And yet, though both were slowly pliable, in the sense that both steadily advanced in Liberalism as they recognised the needs and requirements of the nation, both attested their real consistency of mind by obstinate adherence to many of their earliest, if not always their most generous convictions. Both distinctly promoted the cause of English democracy by the same candour and logical directness which enabled them to accept inevitable conclusions. Neither of them had it in him to be an unbending partisan. The force of individuality was too strong in both, whilst their moral courage and high spirit forbade them to persist in any course which their judgment had condemned.

It is, however, in the domain of foreign politics that the career of Canning receives its most notable parallels in the career of Mr Gladstone. The later statesman inherited most of the traditions and even methods by which Canning's policy was distinguished; and by a strange coincidence he encountered very similar conditions for their exercise. Both found the affairs of south-eastern Europe disturbed by Turkish misrule, by

Russian intrigue, and by the aspirations for liberty of the Porte's Christian subjects. Both took the helm of the State from the hands of men who had made themselves intensely unpopular by neglecting the best national traditions of Englishmen; and in each case it was necessary to reverse this antecedent policy, and to give satisfaction to the public mind by revindicating the right of the people to speak the last word in foreign as in home politics. Canning's system of diplomacy and international engagements was sharply contrasted with that of Lord Castlereagh; the incompatibility of their temper and modes of thought had made their presence in the same Cabinet almost an impossibility; and nothing could have been more welcome to the country than the substitution of the commoner for the peer in the direction of its foreign policy. In circumstances not dissimilar, Mr Gladstone succeeded Lord Beaconsfield in 1880.

The great services rendered by these two statesmen to the Greeks, and to other oppressed nationalities in various parts of the world, their coolness in dealing with groundless panics, their vehemence in denouncing artificial panics, and their success in establishing England's foreign relations on a basis of justice and dignity, complete a somewhat remarkable parallel, which it may be worth the historian's while to elaborate.

XII.

DEMOCRATIC DIPLOMACY.

It is sometimes contended (as already said a few pages back) that the democracy, as such, can have no distinct foreign policy, in as much as it is bent on popular progress, material and social, and its natural aims are limited to domestic concerns and ameliorations.

When Mr Gladstone was raised to power in 1880, some of his most ardent followers looked with considerable jealousy on the efforts which he put forth in the interests of the Greeks and Montenegrins. They urged that it was the special business of a popular Minister to devote himself to the internal affairs of the country, to political reform, to retrenchment, to peaceful constitutional development, to legislation in the interests of the community. They were especially anxious as to the results which might follow from the establishment of the European concert, on the ground that it might lead us into new complications, aggravate old quarrels, commit us to fresh responsibilities, and even plunge us into war. It behoved us, they said, to mind our own business, to set our own house in order, and leave to others the solution of international disputes when our standing as a free commercial nation was not clearly involved.

Very few, it may be, of the politicians who took this line of argument were wholly out of sympathy with the desire of their leaders to reverse the foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, even if the reversal

should go so far as to necessitate the bringing of diplomatic pressure to bear upon the Porte. Their desire was to withdraw from the enterprises and questionable engagements of the English imperialists, for the very reason that these imperialists had transgressed the bounds of a safe and sober policy, and had interrupted the course of sound national development. They wished the Continental Powers to be assured at once that the country had repudiated the method of disturbance and intrigue, and that it had returned to the methods of steady industrial progress; and they had been sufficiently convinced by facts to believe that the constraint of the Porte was necessary before Europe could re-enter upon its peaceful path. But they could not contemplate any course which even remotely threatened to entangle us in a network of intrigue, and to divert our attention from the home concerns which had latterly been so much neglected.

These sentiments were natural, and thoroughly worthy of respect. The nation had been led away from its domestic pursuits, and sickened by a succession of projects, adventures, speculations, and disasters, until at length there was no aspiration more entirely predominant in the minds of the majority of Englishmen than the aspiration to return to a commonplace and unambitious programme of action. Many reforms, more or less urgent, stood over from the sessions which had passed; and if the Conservatives had remained in power they would probably have stood over for years to come. These the nation wished to see accomplished; and above all there was a growing intensity of desire to legislate in a drastic manner for the remedy of Irish grievances. It was comprehended on all hands that Mr Gladstone was the statesman most likely to achieve these objects,

and there was thus a forcible reason for replacing him in office, over and above the reason derived from his bold condemnation of Lord Beaconsfield's foreign policy.

Now there can be no question that the democratic opinion here indicated was both general amongst all classes of democrats and in accordance with the natural instincts of the people. But in some quarters it seems to have been carried to an extreme. Undue stress was laid upon the urgency of particular domestic reforms, and less than due weight was given to the importance of the problems of foreign policy which had been left unsolved by the former Government. And the misapprehension is one by no means uncommon amongst democratic writers and thinkers of a certain school of thought. They are apt to forget that there can be no regular domestic progress so long as the country has unfulfilled pledges or engagements abroad, and assuredly none so long as the public mind is disturbed by a feeling that the honour of the nation has been brought into question by its Ministers. Both these conditions existed in 1880, and it was inevitable that a very strong current of opinion in regard to external affairs should pass over all ranks of society, and should for a time overwhelm, or threaten to overwhelm, matters of purely domestic concern. It was evident to the great majority that the best and speediest way of making progress with the general interests of the country was to arrange as peacefully as possible the difficulties of the moment. This was at any rate the necessary initial step, however unwelcome its necessity may have been. Without it there could be no restoration of industry and security, and the problems which had been shirked and avoided would have forced themselves upon the Ministry with fatal pertinacity. The policy of the Government in 1880 was in short a policy not merely of

peace but also of popular advancement and reform ; and as such it was indisputably a foreign policy which the leader of a democratic people might fairly and serviceably adopt.

It cannot however be seriously contended that the English people, as its democratic character expands and strengthens, will ever be able to dispense with an active system of policy in regard to foreign affairs. The nation may grow more industrial in its habits and aspirations ; it may attach greater importance to internal development, to legislative reform and social emancipations, but it can never be relieved from the responsibility of guarding its interests beyond the seas, and of dealing with the complications thrust upon it by other countries or by its public servants. Nor does it seem likely that any but a small minority would either expect or wish that it could isolate itself within its own borders. The utmost that can be looked for is that the causes and inducements of trouble beyond the seas may be contracted within a narrow compass, that the need for intrigue and the risk of war may be diminished in every possible way, and that the system adopted by our statesmen may be of such a character as to reduce the dangers of the State to a minimum.

The party traditions of foreign policy, and to some extent the general tradition of the country which has been kept distinct from party, have served their turn more or less successfully in the past. Their achievement has been to convert the small island of England into a mighty empire, to make her authority respected throughout the world, to win for her renown as an enterprising, energetic and victorious nation, as a nation of hardy adventurers, of persevering colonists, of indomitable fighters, to build up her imperial dominions on a foundation of in-

flexible strength and impartial law—to extend, to increase, to overbear, to predominate over all other peoples, if not in war yet in industry and commerce and wealth. It is to the wielders of the old traditions that we owe very much of what we have and are at this moment. They were themselves the outcome and product of the national growth, and they conducted our affairs in successive ages as the genius of their race and nation inspired them. They may have lacked origination and moral courage, but still they have earned the gratitude of all generations by the vast and incomparable results of their efforts. There have been mistakes, there have been wrong methods and inexcusable acts in the construction of our edifice of empire. It may be that some of these mistakes will yet be remedied, and that for some of these inexcusable acts England may yet find means to make a noble restitution. But the dominion which has come down to us from our ancestors is an inheritance and a charge which ought not to be lightly esteemed by any man of English descent or nationality, and which must not be allowed to deteriorate in the hands of a democratic people or Government.

It is no doubt a very serious question—whether the democracy is capable of sustaining the weight of empire which must presently fall (if it has not already fallen) upon its shoulders. Serious at any rate this question must be for such as have no faith in the wisdom or competence of the English people at large—for such as believe that competent Ministers and patriotic resolution are to be looked for only amongst the traditional ruling classes, or amongst the middle classes whose political emancipation dates fifty years back instead of ten or

twelve. For those who have more confidence in the general good sense and capability of their countrymen, and who believe that the simple possession of a vote gives to every enfranchised Englishman the knowledge and the inspiration necessary for its intelligent use, the prospect is by no means so dark. And if, instead of taking alarm at the very name of democracy, and concluding that it must be in its nature inimical to ideas of imperial sway and statesmanlike government, the timid forecasters of the future of England would consider all that is reassuring and hopeful, as well as that which gives them cause for anxiety, it is possible that they might with no long delay gain confidence from the consideration.

The word "democracy" has been used in various senses, and indeed its true meaning differs from age to age or from year to year in accordance with the condition of the people themselves. The English democracy, it is needless to say, is not to be identified simply with the lower categories of Parliamentary voters, corresponding for instance with the householders and lodgers admitted to the franchise in 1867. No doubt these categories are, broadly speaking, the bulk of what we generally understand to be implied in the term ; but the democratic elements of society are in no way limited to them.

In the first place, we shall encounter in every rank, from the aristocracy downwards, men who on political grounds elect to be classed with the democracy—who will conscientiously use the words of the French noble, and say, "*s'il faut choisir, je suis du peuple.*" Midway in the social classification there are of course many thousands of pure democrats—men and women whose easy circumstances, or education, or refinement of mind

and life, cannot deprive them of the instincts and aspirations which more than poverty or humble station give them a claim to the title which they affect. Lower than the lowest of the men who are yet enfranchised come the hundreds of thousands to whom the vote has been virtually promised—the agricultural labourers, and other smaller categories in borough and county constituencies who are likely to profit by the next Reform Act. Beyond these again are the many thousands, more or less intelligent, who are waiting for their qualification, or who fail to acquire it because they constantly move from place to place, or who lose it by the occasional acceptance of poor-relief, or who are so low down in the scale as to be untouched by the Act of 1867. All these can think, and endure, and aspire, and complain: their voices are heard in the streets and their hands are lifted round the platforms of public speakers: they count at the polls of popular assemblies and they sit on the self-constituted juries of popular opinion. Their will is often as powerful, their impulses as generous, their understanding as direct and shrewd as those of their emancipated fellow-citizens. One and all, from lord to pauper, they swell the ranks of the democracy, and make it beyond all question and cavil the preponderating and overwhelming “mass” of the community.

Not a party, nor a section, but rather (by way of distinction) the People itself. For this democracy, including as it does, numerically, perhaps seven-eighths or nine-tenths of the population of Great Britain, and represented as it is, intellectually, by so many speakers and writers of the highest rank, and by so large a proportion of what we call the organs of public opinion, comprises within itself, in addition to its share of the capital and commerce and territorial influence of the

country, the great interest of labour as a whole, the excess of political energy which is due to the need and demand for reform, the power of discipline and organisation which always resides with a well-directed multitude, the impetus and prestige of success, which are sure to belong to the rising classes in a country where so much remains to be won for the lower orders. Set on one side the sections of the aristocracy, the plutocracy, and one or two others easy to be numbered however numerous, and eliminate all of every class who from motives more or less respectable prefer to cast their votes with these, the remainder are not simply the vast majority of the people, but in a very real sense they are the actual people.

The power of the English democracy, its political significance, its ability under existing conditions to make its will prevail in the councils of the nation, have received in our own days many notable proofs. It was popular opinion, the opinion of men who could not vote as well as the opinion of those who could, which practically won the battle of Free Trade, and many minor struggles of domestic policy—the Reform Act of 1867 included—between that time and the present. It was popular opinion which saved us from war on more than one occasion, during the last two Administrations of Palmerston, and the last of Lord Beaconsfield. It was popular opinion which sanctioned and made possible the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881. Yet more apposite to our present inquiry, it was the force of popular opinion which arrested the great imperialist revival of 1876-80, which repudiated a foreign policy whose displays of glory had no attractions for the hard-working, tax-paying multitudes, however much they may have flattered some of the less responsible sections of the democracy.

That there is danger also in the authority thus unmistakably wielded by the masses must not be overlooked. A mob misled may exert a pernicious influence upon the Government of a free country ; and such an influence has been exerted in England at least once or twice in our generation. But experience such as that which was gained in the crisis of 1880 serves to show us that the best safeguard against the ignorance or passion, the feebleness or the fickleness of the residuum is secured by conferring the Parliamentary vote as rapidly and widely as possible. The dignity of the franchise, and the political education which is its necessary complement, increase our guarantee of wise and prudent action in the mass of the people. The danger, moreover, is diminished in proportion as the humblest classes of the community, voters and non-voters, acquire the skill and the habit of reading ; for they are in this way brought to a great extent under the guidance of journalists, pamphleteers, and the whole school of writers for the public press, whose influence, directed and moderated by the conditions under which they themselves labour in their high vocation, is in general more beneficent and effectual than the influence of platform orators and party agents.

Against the peril of democratic or pseudo-democratic passion, and the further peril of ignorant and unsound judgments on questions of foreign policy, must be set the often-attested danger of committing our public affairs to the discretion of monarchs, hereditary rulers, and the representatives of privileged classes. If the country cannot hope to be placed beyond the reach of danger in one shape or the other, and if something must be entrusted to the fallibility of human guidance, it seems better—the spirit of the age declares it to be better—to

give the interests of the State into the hands of the aggregate of individuals composing the State. Under our old systems we have had wars undertaken for the desperate and selfish purpose of establishing a dynasty, or of avoiding a revolution. We have had wars for the equally desperate and cynical purpose of gratifying the pride, the resentment, the obstinate will, or the overweening intrigues of statesmen. We have had wars undertaken most unjustifiably for the arrest of national developments, for the support of oppressive monarchs against their subjects, for the promotion of the objects of a party, from motives of aggression, whether national or commercial or imperial. Some such wars, it may be, would be waged by a pure democracy, and certainly there would be a peril of such wars under an imperfect democracy. But it is fair to conclude, from historic experience and theoretic deduction, that a democratic form of government, based upon popular representative institutions of the most liberal kind—with, for a time, the inevitable derogation of traditional systems and official precedents—would render us more free from war and not less assured against disaster than we have been at any period of our national development.

What is to be the system of foreign policy which will be found most suitable and serviceable to the English democracy? What is there that we must abandon, and what is there that we must adopt, in order to accommodate our national traditions to the need of the future?

These are questions which may be usefully put, and to which every suggested reply may bring its contribution of enlightenment, but which could not be fully answered without assumption and dogmatism. It may be worth

while to review some of the principal solutions of the problem which have been proposed by statesmen and public writers.

In the first place it will perhaps be admitted as beyond dispute that, with the increase of democratic origination in the councils of the State, the tendency of diplomacy will be more and more towards openness, transparency, and publicity. Of course the old craft of diplomacy—the subtle, overreaching, lying craft which they brought to perfection in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—is already virtually dead. The diplomacy of our own times is more simple and honest. There are indeed still varieties and degrees of the craft ; but there is nothing in the current tradition of English diplomacy which requires a representative of our court abroad to adopt an untruthful or underhand method. On the contrary, the best models are marked by straightforwardness, and the most honoured precepts are those which commend a frank and open bearing. The late Lord Clarendon, examined shortly before his death by a Select Committee on the Diplomatic Service, gave it as his opinion that if any special art were required in diplomacy it was “to be perfectly honest, truthful, and straightforward.”

It is impossible to doubt, after a review of such facts as have been dealt with in the foregoing pages, that few influences have been more powerful in bringing back the formal intercourse of European Governments from the underhand to the above-board style of diplomacy than the character of English statesmanship, and of the English Ministers who have conducted the affairs of their country at the continental courts. The national temperament was less suited to the subtle and more or less dishonest modes evolved by Spanish and Italian diplomatists, or by schools of diplomacy such as that of Strasburg,

wherein Metternich imbibed his earliest lessons, than it was to blunt and downright modes of its own ; and as English policy, backed by English ships and resources, was often found to prevail over the more elaborate diplomacy and the vaster armaments of other Powers, it was only natural that the quality of our statesmanship should secure respect, not to say imitation from our allies.

There is no need to claim special credit for our influence over the diplomacy of Europe ; and indeed it may be admitted that the chief agent in purifying and simplifying the diplomatic art has been the greater publicity of the conditions under which it has been practised. The distance between capital and capital has been diminished by railway and telegraph ; despatch follows despatch with greater rapidity ; the results of negotiation are more quickly reached ; the various steps in the process are either allowed to become public before the process is at an end or are made common property after a much shorter interval than was formerly the case. Something may be lost by this publicity. It limits the confidences exchanged between ambassadors ; it cuts them off from sources of information which might otherwise be open to them ; and it occasionally leads to offence or annoyance on the part of a Government or a court. But on the whole its advantage considerably outweighs its drawbacks. It is a powerful incentive to honesty of purpose and method, rendering falsehood difficult and duplicity hazardous. The mighty force of public opinion is almost as effectual in the councils of Europe as in the councils of individual States, and within recent times it has been known to untie or cut a knot over which mere diplomacy might have laboured in vain.

We are not to conclude that the art is decaying, or its necessity passing away, because it is accommodating

itself to a new order of things. Diplomacy in the sense of a discussion by statesmen of international questions must always be indispensable ; and some diplomatists will be more skilful than others ; and the rivalry of individual Ministers is not likely to be less keen as the resort to war becomes more and more rare. But to everything that is not perfectly just and straightforward the democracy of our age is instinctively opposed ; and thus only the reality, and nothing of the ceremonial of diplomacy can be expected to survive or to be restored. At any rate for England in the future—an England of democratic government, a commercial empire bent on consolidation as opposed to aggression, and on industrial rather than imperial development—the sphere of diplomacy is likely to be contracted within the narrowest possible circumference. As we cannot dispense with resident ministers at foreign capitals, we may be content to limit their action to what is absolutely unavoidable. As time goes on, and as the will of the democracy more and more predominates, it will doubtless feel itself entitled to demand that an English minister shall be regarded first and foremost as our chief business agent in the country to which he is accredited. It will probably require that diplomacy shall be made less of a profession, that the area of selection for ambassadors and embassy officials shall be much wider, that changes in their appointment shall be more frequent, and that officious action on the part of our representatives shall be discouraged, forbidden, and guarded against.

It is manifest that the diplomatic system of a democracy must approximate more nearly to the model of the United States than to that of any of the European Powers ; and there is no modification which ought to be

attempted with greater zeal by a people anxious to minimise the dangers to which all peoples must be subjected. In the diplomacy of our own time and country, as Professor Bernard writes,* there is a special risk "that native habits of thought and feeling may be quite worn away in one whose whole life from youth to age is spent in foreign courts, and further that foolish rivalries and jealousies may be kept alive (as at certain European capitals they have been) by the mere force of tradition and habit between nations whose agents have been used to regard themselves as employed to watch and counteract each other."

How much have we not been called upon to pay for the maintenance of the mere traditions of the Constantinople embassy—apart from the absolute needs and value of that embassy!

The right conclusion seems to be that up to a certain point diplomacy will always be a necessity; that its domain ought to be and must be made distinctly narrow; and that every license of our diplomatists beyond their assigned narrow limits can tend only to danger and mischief.

What then are to be the limits? Can they be defined? If we must have a system which can be described and taught, within what lines is it to be constructed? In other terms, what are the interests which our Foreign Ministers are imperatively required to guard, and in defence of which it is absolutely necessary for us to maintain our representatives across the seas?

There is a sense in which England is more bound than any other country in the world to keep watch and ward

* *Four Lectures on Subjects connected with Diplomacy.* Lect. 3.

over its interests. We have frontiers in every latitude and longitude. Our fleets crowd every sea, and carry English merchants to every shore. We are not the mere island which we used to be, hardly more than a century ago. We have an empire on our hands such as no nation ever had before, and no nation is likely to have again. We must administer this empire whether we would or no ; and in order to do so we must send our deputies to every square of the cadastral chart. It is not for us to consider whether we will have a system of foreign policy or not, whether we will have a diplomacy or not, whether we will be imperial in our modes of government or simply insular and exclusive. All that we can do is to assign limits to our methods of rule, to multiply precautions against the perils that environ us, and (if we see fit) to resolve that our burden of empire is already sufficiently heavy without adding to it by a featherweight of responsibility.

For our colonies we have colonial governments ; and the wisdom of our legislators in the last generation has made the links that bind them to us so light and supple that the Colonial Office rarely needs the aid of the War Office or the Admiralty to strengthen its authority in the most distant climes. The colonies of England are so strong, and their relations with the mother country are as a rule so firm and amicable, that we are almost relieved of anxiety in respect of them. Justice is a sceptre which suffices to maintain our sway over the vast dominions of Canada, of Australia and New Zealand, of South Africa, of the West Indies and the scattered island settlements which Englishmen have made their homes. If they chose to leave us we could scarcely prevent them. If they were attacked by our enemies no English fleet or army could be more effectual in their

defence than their own internal resources. It is more necessary that we should secure the moral than the physical bonds which unite them to the empire ; and it is not in regard to them that a just English Government need keep its vigils and nurse its anxieties.

But we have dependencies which we hold on other terms, and which own our authority in another spirit. The fruits of conquest and treaty belong to us by a title altogether different from the title of colonisation. It may not be so trivial or so mischievous as some men think it to inquire into the legitimacy of our title-deeds to these dependencies, or into the justice or advantage of their retention ; but such inquiries need not be raised in the present place. We have duties and obligations dating from actual possession, and what we have to consider—what the English democracy will more and more anxiously consider—is the basis of government and defence on which our foreign dependencies are to be held in the future.

One thing only need be said in respect of our title to possession, and it is this. No question of credit or prestige seems to be necessarily involved in the maintenance of a subject territory or island. There may be considerations of policy, of sentiment, of commercial advantage, of acquired duties towards the subjected inhabitants, of danger from other countries in the event of a particular dependency passing from our hands to theirs, which would forbid us to dream of surrendering any of the territories now dependent upon us. But if these considerations had no weight, we should forfeit neither credit nor prestige by abandoning them. If it seemed good to us to divest ourselves of the responsibility—if it would not hurt us, but on the contrary benefit and relieve us—to cut adrift a rabbit-warren in the North Sea, or a rock in

the Mediterranean, or a continent in Asia, we might do this without misgiving as to our honour and repute. England is not so weak as to fall to the ground even for the loss of India—especially since it is extravagant to suppose that India could ever in that case be brought into subjection to any other European Power. And England is not so low in the esteem of the world that an act of national emancipation, however great and unprecedented, could do her dishonour.

But the question has not arisen, and may never arise. No party at the present moment—probably not a dozen members of Parliament as now constituted—would listen to any proposal for the gradual retrocession of India to the native princes, with the contemplated result of our ultimate withdrawal from the country. And it is by no means to be concluded that if the democracy had control of the Government—if the Cabinet were purely democratic, and were supported by a large majority in the House of Commons—it would be disposed to abandon either India or any other of our possessions abroad. The utmost that appears likely to be attempted is to place India on the footing of a federal colony, with more or less of self-government, and with such guarantees as it may be possible to take against the chance of a repudiation of our suzerainty. Even this is chimerical: the proposal may never be seriously made or entertained, at any rate in the present century, or under the existing conditions of our political ideas. But it is not unfair to conclude that this would be the limit of danger in regard to India. An English democracy would certainly not be in haste to give up anything which was of manifest value to the country, nor would it—judging by indications which are already plain for all of us to understand—throw a vast country into anarchy and

relative barbarism to which we have contracted so many obligations of duty. It might desire to federate, to emancipate by gradual steps, to bind the country to us by moral and commercial bonds stronger even than a military occupation. But it will never desire to cut off from our dominion this great dependency in Asia, which has quite as much to gain from our good government as we have to gain from its revenues.*

* Perhaps the view most widely entertained by English democrats on the subject of India is one which Mr Bright propounded in the House of Commons a quarter of a century ago (1858), shortly after the great rebellion. "How long," Mr Bright asked, "does England propose to govern India? Nobody answers that question, and nobody can answer it. Be it 50, or 100, or 500 years, does any man with the smallest glimmering of common sense believe that so great a country, with its twenty different nations and its twenty languages, can ever be bound up and consolidated into one compact and enduring empire? I believe such a thing to be utterly impossible. We must fail in the attempt if ever we make it, and we are bound to look into the future with reference to that point. The Presidency of Madras, for instance, having its own Government, would in fifty years become one compact State, and every part of the Presidency would look to the city of Madras as its capital, and to the Government of Madras as its ruling power. If that were to go on for a century or more, there would be five or six Presidencies of India built up into so many compact States; and if at any future period the sovereignty of England should be withdrawn, we should leave so many Presidencies built up and firmly compacted together, each able to support its own independence and its own Government, and we should be able to say we had not left the country a prey to that anarchy and discord which I believe to be inevitable if we insist on holding those vast territories with the idea of building them up into one great empire. But I am obliged to admit that mere machinery is not sufficient in this case. . . . We want something else than mere clerks, stationery, despatches, and so forth. We want what I shall designate as a new feeling in England, and an entirely new policy in India. We must in future have India governed, not for a handful of Englishmen, not for that Civil Service whose praises are so constantly sounded in this House. You may govern India, if you like, for the good of England, but the good of

If in the opinion of statesmen and in the conviction of English public opinion it is ever practicable to federate India as Mr Bright suggests in the passage just cited—if ever, thanks to the steady and law-abiding rule of the country by Englishmen in past times, it is, possible to give a large measure of self-government to the Indian races, leaving them in a condition of secure self-reliance, and yet retaining a close commercial and imperial connection with them—an enormous burden will be taken off our shoulders, and an incalculable relief will be effected in our general system of administration. This, in fact, will be a great temptation of the democracy so soon as it enters on the unfettered exercise of political power—as it is even now a more or less distinct aspiration of perhaps a majority of English voters.

On the whole it would seem that the load of responsibility cast upon our diplomatists in regard to the maintenance of our possessions abroad cannot be lightly thrown off, or even much diminished; whilst on the other hand the tendency of the day, and the especial tendency of the masses of the population, is to seize every opportunity of lightening the load, and circumscribing the action of our officials beyond the seas. The sense in which the English democracy is likely in the future to appreciate the value of a skilful diplomacy, and to cherish the service as indispensable to its welfare, is the sense that was expressed in an answer of Lord Odo

England must come through the channels of the good of India. There are but two modes of gaining anything by our connection with India. The one is by plundering the people of India, and the other by trading with them. I prefer to do it by trading with them. But in order that England may become rich by trading with India, India itself must become rich, and India can only become rich through the honest administration of justice, and through entire security of life and property."

Russell before the Select Committee on the Diplomatic Service referred to a few pages back, when he declared his opinion that diplomacy would become one of our most powerful instruments for the promotion of peace and good relations between different States. "At the present moment," said Lord Odo Russell, "we look to armies to establish peace and goodwill among Christians, but I am sure diplomacy will be a better engine when properly developed and organized. The more feelers you have all over the civilized world, the better informed you are, and the more influence you can exercise; and I think that through an organization of that kind you are more likely to establish peace and goodwill among Christians than you are through armies."

The democracy, once fairly in power, will not be so foolish (for the democracy in power means a widely educated and experienced public opinion) as to reject any serviceable instrument of good government. It will simply claim the right to decide for itself what shall be the development and organization of our diplomatic methods.

Within the limits above indicated—after all possible provisions have been made for controlling the action of officials, diminishing the needless responsibilities and costs of empire, and rendering war as near as may be obsolete as a mode of settling international disputes—it will clearly be the interest of a free and industrial country like England to throw its full strength into the system of arrangements by which its trade with other nations, and the immunity of its citizens in foreign lands and seas, are guaranteed and protected. These arrangements must include, of course, diplomatic representa-

tives at foreign capitals, commercial representatives at the great centres of industry throughout the world, governors and officials in our possessions abroad—practically, in short, the very organization which we have already set on foot. Only, in retaining this organization, and in throwing our whole strength into it, it will behove us to see first that on the frontiers of the empire no superfluous officials, or officious persons, are busy in carrying out their special ideas as to the further development of our dominions, and secondly, that this vast machinery of government is not employed for any purpose except in the protection of our commerce and the guarantee of personal immunity to Englishmen abroad.

It will be said that this is the actual theory of our imperial organisation at the present time—that the State as a State knows nothing of aggressions, or of the construction of scientific frontiers—that English troops in our colonies and dependencies, and English vessels in various seas and harbours, are solely for the defence of English persons and property—and that accumulated experience has brought us gradually and deliberately to the existing arrangements. In other words it may be contended, and is often contended, that as we are in many respects already a democratic country, governed by democratic methods—writing, thinking, and speaking the language of democracy—so in regard to our foreign policy we have at this moment a system and an organization precisely suitable (at any rate in theory) for our popular character and needs. “The democracy widens,” it might be urged, “and advances, and grows stronger year by year. The statesmen of the day understand it, and are content to guide it, without seeking to subject it again. All that is wanted is that a progressive nation shall continue to expand and develop its system of policy

as it develops itself, and as the necessity of the moment may require."

There is so much force in these remarks as to render them in one sense truisms. But it is a pertinent question to ask whether we have no alternative except to wait on the slow process of natural development—and, if we have, whether it would not be well for us to adopt the alternative. It is true enough that the national English policy—the policy of the past fifty or sixty years, let us say—has been on the whole progressive, and has been carried forward with tolerable regularity by our Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries, whichever party may have been in office. It is true that the deflections from this policy have been due to men of both parties, and not exclusively to the party which is responsible for the great relapse of 1876. This also cannot be denied; but since deflections and relapses are so frequent, and even since they are possible, may we not conclude that a really potent democracy—a people arrived at full age, in possession of its patrimony, and thoroughly responsible to itself for its acts and resolutions—would be competent to hasten its political evolution instead of too patiently waiting for it, and to perfect at once its system of policy instead of merely adapting old methods to new circumstances as occasion seems to demand?

It is possible that the theory of "natural development" as applied to political institutions may be scarcely less fallacious than the theory of the "natural enemy." At all events it is indisputably true that, so soon as the people in general are convinced that this or that amendment of our system would be advantageous to the country, the natural course and the wise development will consist in immediately adopting this amendment, instead of waiting until a new emergency has made its adoption

either more easy or more difficult. No doubt our greatest dangers spring from the fact that we cannot in the present condition of parties receive a guarantee that our national policy at its best shall always be respected and carried out by the Government of the day. But there are other and independent dangers arising out of our actual system of policy and diplomacy. Against the first class of dangers the democracy cannot hope to be secure until it wields the sceptre of real power (that is, as above said, until the general public opinion is thoroughly educated and experienced). Against the second class of dangers it is possible that the imperfect and unorganised democracy of the present day should take measures to guard itself.

To perfect our system and to ensure its faithful observance are, therefore, the great and yet the practicable requirements without which we cannot hope to establish our foreign policy on a basis at once firm and enduring. We may expect to find that this policy is constantly and undeviatingly observed by our Ministers whensoever those Ministers are the direct representatives of an experienced and educated nation—when the English democracy is wisely and completely organised, and when its authority over its public servants is immediate and undisputed. In the meantime the problems which confront us in respect of our national foreign policy are neither remote nor impossible for us to solve. They are amongst the most interesting and critical problems of the day, and they may be taken in hand even by the existing constituencies with a reasonable hope of solution.

XIII.

DEMOCRATIC FOREIGN POLICY.

OF the two great facts on which the English system of foreign policy now rests, and on which it must yet more broadly and firmly rest in the future, the one may be deduced from our national history, whilst the other can be inferred from our national character and condition.

(1.) As a free people we have staunchly maintained the principles of freedom throughout the world, admitting (in theory) the right of all other nations to be as free as we are ourselves. And as a people who have gained freedom by methods more or less revolutionary, we have frequently asserted the right of other peoples to decide under what form of government they will live.

(2.) As a commercial nation, having become wealthy and powerful by industry, which has given us vast resources of strength, and enabled us to overcome enemies superior to us in a military sense, we still retain our industrial habits and our commercial instincts, and make the interests of commerce and industry a chief object and consideration of our policy.

These are the two great planks of our national platform. If any other principles, apparently distinct, may be enumerated amongst the leading principles of our system, they will probably be found to fall under one or other of the two above cited.* Freedom and sympathy

* In a speech at West Calder, in November 1879, Mr Gladstone stated the principles on which our policy should be based in the fol-

with freedom—wealth and the promotion of commercial interests: it is on this foundation that our ancestors have built, and that we may be satisfied to consolidate their edifice.

Now in order to guard and perpetuate these acquired possessions of freedom and prosperity it is necessary that the State should surround itself with guarantees of their enjoyment. And of these guarantees the most effectual is the continued maintenance of peace. The nation that most steadily and constantly adheres to a peaceful policy, whose wars are least frequent and whose expenditure on military and naval armaments is proportionately the lowest, will clearly prosper most in the pur-

lowing terms. (The second column underneath will indicate how Mr Gladstone's six principles may be included in the broader classification.)

"1. That we should *foster* the strength of the Empire by just legislation and by economy at home, thereby producing two great elements of national power, viz., wealth which is the physical element, and union and contentment which are moral elements, and that we should *reserve* the strength of the Empire for great and worthy occasions.

2. That we should do our utmost to preserve the peace of the world.

3. That we should use every endeavour to maintain the concert of Europe, remembering that common action for a common object is the only way in which we can unite the Great Powers in obtaining objects connected with the common good of all.

4. That we should avoid needless and entangling engagements.

5. That we should acknowledge the equal rights of all nations.

6. That we should have a sympathy with freedom, and a desire to give it a scope founded not upon visionary ideas, but upon the long experience of many generations within the shores of this happy isle."

[This passage is quoted from a paper by Mr Grant Duff on "Foreign Policy" (Macmillan, 1880).]

1. This is the second of the two principles laid down in the text.

2-5. Peace, concert, qualified non-intervention, and the freedom of commercial and other international relations, are principles subservient and ancillary to (1) and (6). Their observance is necessary to the accumulation of national wealth and the enjoyment of popular freedom.

6. This is the first of the two principles in the text.

suit and accumulation of wealth, and will be in the best condition to reap the full advantages of freedom—as by the enactment of beneficial laws, the cultivation of the arts and amenities of social life, and so forth. In time of war it often happens—and during a war of special magnitude it must of necessity happen—that commerce is arrested in almost all its channels, that industry is paralysed, and that the possession of free institutions by the people becomes little better than a mockery.

There is a fine passage in one of Mr Bright's speeches in the House of Commons against the Crimean War, wherein the eloquent advocate of peace draws in few words a graphic picture of the sacrifices incurred by war and the gains which accrue to a nation from its avoidance. "The past events of our history," said Mr Bright, "have taught me that the intervention of this country in European wars is not only unnecessary, but calamitous; that we have rarely come out of such intervention having succeeded in the objects we fought for; that a debt of £800,000,000 sterling has been incurred by the policy which the noble Lord (John Russell) approves, apparently for no other reason than that it dates from the time of William III.; and that, not debt alone has been incurred, but we have left Europe at least as much in chains as before a single effort was made by us to rescue her from tyranny. I believe if this country, seventy years ago, had adopted the principle of non-intervention in every case where her interests were not directly and obviously assailed, that she would have been saved from much of the pauperism and brutal crimes by which our Government and people have alike been disgraced. This country might have been a garden, every dwelling might have been of marble, and every person who treads its soil might have been sufficiently educated. We should indeed have had less

of military glory. We might have had neither Trafalgar nor Waterloo ; but we should have set the high example of a Christian nation, free in its institutions, courteous and just in its conduct towards all foreign States, and resting its policy on the unchangeable foundation of Christian morality."

Englishmen are perhaps much more inclined to agree with Mr Bright to-day than they were a quarter of a century ago, and many thousands would now be found to echo nearly every word of this passage. At any rate it seems to express the characteristic ideas of the democracy on the subject of peace and war. The cultivated public opinion of the country which is hereafter to lead the democracy in England will doubtless understand sufficiently well that the disuse of war does not and cannot depend on one nation alone—that no nation can enjoy perpetual peace unless it has the co-operation of its neighbours and allies—and that the frailty of human nature, or the tenuity of human wisdom, is fairly certain at some time or other to bring disaster on the State. No reasonable man expects finality or perfection in a system or an executive Government, and thus there must be for years to come occasional wars which might with a little more prudence be prevented. But at the same time the democracy may be counted on to repudiate the traditional combinations and complications of Europe in which our forefathers delighted to meddle, and to reduce in every conceivable way the occasions of intervention in quarrels which do not "directly and obviously" touch our interests.

In order as much as possible to systematise the policy of peace, and to make this policy regular and serviceable, it is indispensable that the nation should first have educated itself up to a point at which the undertaking

of a needless war would be morally impossible, and wanton intervention in the affairs of other nations absolutely impossible. It is a ripe public opinion rather than a formal system, or public opinion informing and constituting a system, to which we must look for a pledge against future wars ; and we are now fortunately arrived at such a stage in our development that we can point to the successful use of methods appropriate to a free and industrial democracy. We have avoided wars by the moral force of opinion (as in 1859, in 1863, in 1871, and in 1878), we have boldly accepted the alternative method of settling disputes, which consists in submitting them to arbitration (as in 1872), and we have even had the courage to arrest a war already begun (as in 1880-1), and thus in the very strongest manner to assert our deliberate election of peace.

The condemnation of war on principle, as generally unjust and nearly always unprofitable, and the moral courage which enables us to pass over minor causes of war such as in former generations would infallibly have led us to fight, are based on mental cultivation and on the lessons of experience ; but the resort to arbitration is an active exercise of the national authority which might be formally perpetuated, and sanctioned by international agreements. Arbitration once approved and accepted by some of the leading Powers in the world, it is manifest that the first step would have been taken towards a general disarmament. The chief excuse for the monstrous armaments now raised by all the European States is the uncertainty of the situation, and the doubt from day to day which country is likely to be next attacked. If this fear could be extinguished by some system or guarantee of arbitration in the event of serious dispute, the whole aspect of the case would be altered, and the

great military nations would be able to disarm in comparative safety.

Of course disarmament alone would be of little use in the preservation of peace. No nation with a good quarrel, no nation unjustly attacked would be deterred from fighting by the mere fact that its services were on a peace establishment, though this would undoubtedly be a very powerful inducement. If the disarmament had been fair and equal, the motive would be felt in common by both disputing Powers, and it might generally suffice to restrain them. But with a system of arbitration, based as it might easily be upon an international treaty, drawn up and discussed and agreed to at a formal Congress in a time of unbroken peace—not when blood was hot, at the beginning or end of a great war—why should we think that a solemn treaty of this kind, agreed to by all in the interests of all, would fail to secure its purpose?

Moral agreements fail when the moral sense is not sufficient to hold the contracting parties to the observance of their pledges. But the moral sense which would suffice to make the Great Powers assemble at a Peace Congress and agree to an international compact would probably suffice to make each of them keep faith with the community. The chief need is to bring the nations of Europe to such a mind that the Congress might be summoned by common consent. As soon as our Governments have begun to regard this as a practical matter, and as soon as our diplomatists have succeeded in arranging it, we shall know that a public opinion has been formed strong enough to add authority to the popular will, and to hold monarchs and Ministers to the fulfilment of their pledges.

We need entertain little doubt that the nations would

cling to and elaborate a system of international arbitration when it had once been put into practice. The advantages of the method are so great as compared with the method of war—the saving is so great even for the party against whom the award is given—that no elaborate argument is needed to establish its superiority. The Government of the United States, which as a democratic Government has always been economical of its force and its resources, has practised arbitration in repeated instances, and with various nations; and it may be said to have definitely accepted it as a mode of settling all ordinary disputes. We ourselves have made trial of it; and if the finding of the Geneva court was not calculated to persuade the people of this country that arbitration must always be a satisfactory thing in itself, yet there can be no doubt that in the long run the settlement of the *Alabama* difficulty has commended itself to Englishmen as a wise and rational act. The conclusion has been very much what Mr Bright concluded from the moment when the American claim was first preferred against us. “If any man thinks he has a right to go to law with another, and that other has an answer to his claim, the case must be heard. And so between two great nations and two free Governments. If one has claims against the other, and the other has counter claims, clearly nothing can be more fair than that those claims should be courteously and honestly considered.”

The preservation of peace, by a system of arbitration or by any other means, will depend, as already said, upon the elevation of public opinion in the several States of a community, and upon the international agreement of these States through the medium of their Governments.

The concert which has so often been found useful in asserting the authority of the community, with or without menace of war, must be employed in the direct interest of peace before the pursuit of peace can be systematized. International concert, therefore, will be an indispensable element in the democratic system of foreign policy—not merely as a principle to be occasionally resorted to, but as a constant aim of our Ministers and a constant object of our diplomacy. No means of securing all that we desire to obtain from other nations can be so effectual as the cultivation of good feeling between peoples and Governments, which ought to be the first duty of our representatives at foreign courts.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the practical value of such a diplomacy as this, or the practical effect of reciprocal amity between State and State. With common sense on the part of the peoples, and ordinary prudence on the part of the Governments, war is virtually abolished by the interchange of sympathy which has recently been established between England and the United States, and between England and France. It is to the sympathy of public opinion that we must look for the origination of such a concert as may hereafter guarantee to us the enjoyment of settled peace, of the privileges of free institutions, and of unfettered commerce.

In so far as we have a right, or as we can hope, to take a part with other peoples in the consolidation of their liberties, it is mainly by expressions of public opinion, operating through the concert of nations, that this honourable instinct may be made operative. The expression alone is frequently effectual; and Englishmen have on innumerable occasions displayed their loyalty to freedom in every part of the world, even in despite of the Governments of their own and other

countries. But that which the public opinion of one people has been able to effect in a casual and desultory manner, the Government of that people, acting in concert with other Governments (including or excluding the Government of the people whose liberties are in question) may accomplish in a more pacific and thorough fashion. In any case, the extension of popular liberties throughout the world must inevitably result from the creation of a concert based on sympathetic public opinion.

Concerts not based on such a foundation, though they have called themselves Holy, and have been professedly directed towards the advancement of sacred objects, have usually proved to be tyrannic in their operation. There are indeed cases of concert for particular purposes in which the contracting Powers have bound themselves by a self-denying protocol, and have faithfully observed their pledges, to which liberty has owed great developments. It will perhaps be generally (if not always) found that these genuinely benevolent concerts of the Governments have been dictated by public opinion in the several States, and have not been the spontaneous acts of the Governments themselves.

Although in one sense the principle of international concert covers the whole ground of a democratic system of foreign policy, and though it might consequently be regarded as one of the fundamental rules of action, it is practically a means more than an end of policy, and is adopted in order to insure the peace necessary for the extension of freedom and the accumulation of resources. If we were to look upon concert as an end rather than a means, it would be requisite that we should give credit to the peoples of the world (whether as democracies or not) for an essential and universal motive of pure bene-

volence—not to say of moral or even religious propaganda. There are some who would unhesitatingly affirm the necessary presence of this motive in any worthy system of foreign policy. Mr Bright, for instance—and it is impossible to discuss the character and prospects of the English democracy without frequent reference to the opinions of Mr Bright, in almost every stage of the discussion—dwells emphatically on the presence of a motive based on revealed religion and an inspired Scripture. In a speech delivered at Edinburgh in the year 1853, on the eve of the Crimean War, he addressed his audience in these terms :—

“ You profess to be a Christian nation. You make it your boast even—though boasting is somewhat out of place in such questions—you make it your boast that you are a Protestant people, and that you draw your rule of doctrine and practice, as from a well pure and undefiled, from the living oracles of God, and from the direct revelation of the Omnipotent. You have even conceived the magnificent project of illuminating the whole earth, even to its remotest and darkest recesses, by the dissemination of the volume of the New Testament, in whose every page are written for ever the words of peace. Within the limits of this island alone, on every Sabbath, 20,000, yes, far more than 20,000 temples are thrown open, in which devout men and women assemble that they may worship Him who is the ‘ Prince of Peace.’ Is this a reality ? or is your Christianity a romance ? is your profession a dream ? No, I am sure that your Christianity is not a romance, and I am equally sure that your profession is not a dream. It is because I believe this that I appeal to you with confidence, and that I have hope and faith in the future. I believe that we shall see, and at no very distant time, sound economic

principles spreading much more widely amongst the people; a sense of justice growing up in a soil which hitherto has been deemed unfruitful; and, which will be better than all, the churches of the United Kingdom—the churches of Britain awaking, as it were, from their slumbers, and girding up their loins to more glorious work, when they shall not only accept and believe in the prophecy, but labour earnestly for its fulfilment, that there shall come a time—a blessed time—a time which shall last for ever—when ‘nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.’”

Perhaps there will always be in every democracy, and there will certainly be in the English democracy, a strong infusion of the religious spirit. We may take it for granted that the masses of Englishmen as a rule, and English Governments from time to time, will desire to base their policy upon moral or religious considerations, and that they will in particular aim at establishing peace and international concert on such grounds as those indicated in the passage above quoted. But it can hardly be maintained that these motives will be (or even that they ought to be) of the essence of our foreign policy. For in the first place they could never be universal in any people, and it is clear that a popular policy should be the natural policy of each individual in the State. And in the second place, it would be fatal to the character of a democratic foreign policy—at any rate for Englishmen—that it should involve a moral or a religious propagandism, of which intervention in some shape or mode would be the logical development.

The promotion of concert as a means to an end is therefore a natural adjunct of our foreign policy, and an adjunct without which any system of democratic

policy must be hopeless. But to concede to it the dignity of a fundamental principle, or to urge that either peace or concert should be an universal and absolute aim in a popular system appears to lead us on the path in which Madame Krudener discovered the mystery of the Holy Alliance. There may seem to be every possible distinction between a propaganda of peace and a compact for mutual armed assistance ; but in the long run it would probably be found that the issue in practice was the same. Crusades to enforce the doctrines of peace have not been rare in the past, and a democratic war in the interests of peace might be the outcome of a propaganda such as many estimable men have sought to establish.

It may be said that if the foreign policy of a democratic nation like England be more and more strictly reduced to the two principles of freedom for individuals and freedom in commerce, whilst intervention of every kind is reduced to a minimum, there will be an inevitable tendency to selfishness in our relation with other Powers, which will cause us to confine ourselves to insular aims and methods, and to neglect the great interests of the empire outside our narrow home boundaries. We shall think less of the welfare of the world in general, do less from motives of benevolence, care less by counsel or mediation to preserve peace amongst our allies, be less willing to take upon ourselves such engagements and guarantees as are necessary for the protection of weaker States, and even pay less heed to the extension of freedom in other lands. Our whole energies will be likely to be concentrated in the accumulation of wealth, or perhaps of the simple means of luxury and refinement ; and thus

all the symptoms of decay which have been observed in the great empires of past ages will be developed in this country.

It would undoubtedly be a vast misfortune if one-half or one tithe of these sinister predictions were well founded, and if we were really in peril of degenerating so far from our higher standards. But, happily, the English democracy has sufficient confidence in itself to laugh at such omens as these. There are indeed few signs of decay in the character of Englishmen in the present generation. They have given no evidence to justify the evil prophets—unless it be in their inclination to believe that the empire is sufficiently wide without carrying its limits farther, and in their determination that at any rate these limits shall not be carried farther by unjust aggression. The democratic ~~classes~~ have doubtless decided that “needless and entangling engagements” ought to be avoided, and that we ought as much as possible to confine ourselves to the management of our own affairs. But they have not interpreted this decision as meaning that we ought to exclude all consideration of the affairs of the outer world, or that we ought in any way to contract our sympathies and deny our good offices to weak, struggling, or friendly States. The attitude of these classes in 1880 plainly attested their sympathy with other nations, their attachment to the cause of peace, and their willingness to lead or follow a concert of the Powers in the pursuit of worthy ends. There is no reason to believe that England will ever lose her concern in external affairs, however prudent she may be in undertaking fresh responsibilities, and however much she may be disposed to limit her interventions.

It is conceivable—or rather we may regard it as certain—that the character of English intervention in behalf of

an oppressed race, or a weak ally struggling for independence, would be more effective in proportion as it was rare, deliberate, and the outcome of an irresistible popular opinion.

But indeed there should be no necessity for an argument to persuade any man that the future of England is a bright and not a dark one ; and, in particular, there should be no doubt as to the sufficiency for all high purposes of a system of policy based upon peaceful enterprise and the instincts of freedom. The history of this country is full of instances which prove that these motives are ample for honour as well as for profit, and for noble deeds as well as for material success.

Earlier in the present volume,* these main lines of our popular traditions in the past were considered and compared ; and reason was there seen for the conclusion that the two motives referred to were often found to be merged in our desire as Englishmen "to surround ourselves with independent nations which, being free as we are free, may serve as bulwarks and buttresses of our own power, and, being industrious as we are industrious, may add to our commercial stability. This motive, the resultant force of the other two, has been rather instinctive than clearly defined in the past, but it is probably destined to be the most precise tradition in the system of national foreign policy which is gradually displacing the systems of other days. . . . In the strengthening and confirmation of this tendency we are able to perceive the harmonization of two traditions apparently irreconcilable."

Here, then, we seem to have a satisfactory basis for

* Pp. 84-5.

our foreign policy, and it is on this foundation that we may expect the democracy which is now inheriting power to build up its system. In other words, we may expect that the people of England, as represented first by public opinion and next by the constituencies, will year by year practice a more constrained, a more precise and better defined foreign policy, less variable under successive Ministers, less disturbed by the memory of old traditions, not incompatible with but not relying upon the benevolence of propagandists, and taking for its main, its sufficient, possibly its only imperative principle the development of peaceful material progress throughout the world, by the encouragement of English enterprise, by the provision of markets for English commodities abroad and foreign commodities in England, by the assistance of free States whenever the opportunity presents itself, and by cultivating good relations with every country.

Whilst it is manifest that the old national sympathy with freedom takes its place in this system, yet the special desire to assist other nations in their development might also be accounted for in a different manner. The prosperity of England depends upon the prosperity of the world. Commerce, which is the life-blood of our wide empire, can thrive only by the continuous thrift of the nations with whom we trade. Our wealth accumulates in proportion as we can supply our customers with goods, and constantly employ the hands of our industrial population. Disaster falls upon us when our markets are closed, or when other nations buy less from us, or when we have during some months or years produced more commodities than our customers require. In this case it is necessary that we should discover new customers, that we should find new outlets for our pro-

ductions, and new demands to occupy our industry. To this end we must busy ourselves both in developing our trade with every existing State and in helping to build up new States which are likely to traffic with us. And since a free nation will trade incalculably better than an oppressed population—since a civilised people will be more industrious than a despotic country—we have every incentive in our own interests and necessities to promote the cause of freedom wherever we find it.

It would be a mistake to look upon this policy as selfish or unworthy. The happiness of every individual in the State depends upon the general prosperity of the State, and further upon the general prosperity of the world. And by happiness here is implied not merely that a man should have the means of supplying his material wants, but also that he should be in a position to add comforts, refinements, and luxuries to his necessities ; that he should be able to educate his children according to his mind, and that he should have leisure to enter upon the higher levels of thought and imagination which constitute for him (as for his fellow-citizens) the life most worth living.

The English democracy is not likely to take the means for the end, and to suppose that the fruits of industry are won so soon as the market is closed and the ship sails back into port. For it is the very essence of the democratic spirit to construct the domestic edifice on a basis of independence and security ; and it was in search of these solid foundations of personal freedom that our ancestors in every generation went forth beyond the seas, to barter on every coast and to ransack every clime. Industry and enterprise led them to wealth, and wealth to independence, and independence to the attainment of those

inestimable liberties which they have handed down to their descendants.

It is in this respect that our commercial policy acquires its true dignity for every reasonable and right-judging man. Englishmen are well able, both by experience and by natural disposition, to discriminate between a policy built on honourable industry and a policy which dissipates instead of accumulating resources, and which seeks an unprofitable glory by more or less unscrupulous enterprise. They are able to see how little of real value is gained when we have created international complications in order to manipulate them, and when we have disturbed the councils of Europe in order to win a shallow distinction in them. "True glory," it has been finely said, "depends not upon military success, which is at best splendid misfortune, but upon brilliant achievements in the arts of peace, upon wealth wisely and nobly used for public and private purposes ; upon long lists of great statesmen, great poets, great historians, great artists, great orators, great men of science ; upon thinking first the thoughts which other nations adopt, and building up first the institutions which other nations imitate ; upon deserving to obtain from the future the praise of having been wise and just. That and that alone entitles any people to claim for itself the first place amongst the nations." *

It is to such noble rivalry, to such aims and resolutions to excel, that Englishmen have long stood committed ; and we need have no fear that their aspirations will ever be lower or meaner than these. Least of all does it seem likely that the democracy will lower the national standard in this respect when we remember that its ranks are largely recruited from the "long lists of

* Mr Grant Duff ; "Foreign Policy" ; (Macmillans).

great statesmen; great poets, great historians, great artists, great orators, great men of science." A party (if it must be a party) whose leaders are drawn from the aristocracy of talent and culture will hardly fall back upon the "occidental flats" of mere wealth and false glory.

The question remains, how we are to carry our policy of freedom and commerce into effect. What modification of our system as it stands will be necessary when the democracy is established in power? How shall we contrive that our responsibilities may be as nearly as possible limited to the defence and guarantee of our commercial interests—which implies that our whole naval and military force shall be at the back of our merchants and travellers, and that our whole moral force shall be exerted in behalf of free nations, or nations struggling to be free?

Perhaps the first answer which a candid man will feel himself constrained to give to these questions is that the national foreign policy of England does already in theory (and especially, as we have seen, from the year 1879) approximate to the policy which is demanded by our character and circumstances as an expanding democracy. The potential change of 1867 became an actual change and development in 1880, and at this moment we are able to say that the Government of the country in its foreign relations is very much what a perfect democracy would desire to see it.

We have no serious entanglements from which danger is to be apprehended. We have no alliances or secret understandings (so far as one of the outside public may judge) which might at any time involve us in a foreign complication, and still less a war, against our will. We

have given no guarantee on our individual account ; and we have given few joint guarantees, express or implied, which would imperatively demand from us a costly military intervention. Such pledges as we have given to particular States (express or implied) could be effectually discharged by a timely demonstration with our fleet—as we have recently proved in several notable instances. And whatever guarantees of this kind are now in existence cover the independence and immunity of States which are the outposts of freedom in commerce and constitution—States like Greece, with a great commercial future and a critical geographical position, or like Egypt, on a highroad of English traffic, which it is vital to us to control or neutralise, or like Belgium, the situation of which on the Continent has been supposed to render it specially important to the security of British interests.

These guarantees, however, are of unequal force and value. It is by no means certain that Englishmen, properly consulted, would approve the guarantee of Belgian independence such as it actually exists ; and it is very doubtful whether they would give such a guarantee at the present time, in the absence of a precedent. The reason is that the independence of Belgium is not now regarded as entering into any system of English defence or security ; and its commercial importance is not so great as to warrant us in going to war on this ground alone. It is impossible to foresee what would be the decision of a pure democracy in the event of a sudden invasion of Belgium by France or Germany ; but we can scarcely suppose that an absolute and sole guarantee of its independence would be given by Englishmen in a time of peace. The same thing is probably true of most of the States which have heretofore enjoyed our guarantee. We may not be able in respect of any one of them to

wash our hands of all responsibility ; but the tendency of public opinion is clearly to limit our positive pledges as strictly as may be.

This presupposed, and assuming the nation to be bent on preserving peace by every honourable means, we may conclude that its diplomacy would be relied upon and strengthened in proportion as its military and naval expenditure was (within due bounds) retrenched. England could never with safety resign her supremacy on the seas ; but even in her navy there are probably large retrenchments which might prudently be effected. With a navy capable of defending her commerce, and every coast of her extensive empire—with an army equal to any emergency at all possible for us to foresee—we might hold ourselves independent of the gigantic armaments of other Powers to a greater extent than we actually do. But in this case it would be specially incumbent upon us to perfect in every conceivable manner the system of our diplomatic and consular services, in order to supply whatever defect of strength or repute might follow (or be supposed to follow) our open repudiation of the methods of war.

“Not,” writes Mr Grant Duff, in a pamphlet already quoted, “until our public men take more seriously the duty of being students of public affairs before they can claim with any right to lead public opinion about them ; not until, by making the Foreign Office, the Diplomatic and Consular Services, as good as they can be made, we have provided Government with proper eyes and ears all over the world, are we authorised to say that our crowned democracy cannot manage international affairs. The truth is, it has never had a fair chance of doing so, it has never possessed proper organs for their management. It has been sometimes imagined that the gradual

democratizing of Europe would be fatal to diplomacy, the most exclusive and aristocratic of professions. No one will continue to hold that opinion who looks below the surface at the realities of things. A great deal of the glitter and frippery that were once associated with diplomacy, and made it the laughing-stock of serious men, has already fallen off it, and something more has still to fall, but the real importance of diplomacy is only beginning. More and more the diplomatist will think of himself not merely as the representative of his Sovereign, out of whose personal income the English diplomatist used till recent times to be paid, but as the representative of the whole nation, from the Sovereign downwards. More and more will he recognise himself to be the expression of what ought to be, and, in spite of occasional Jingo outbreaks, is with every decade becoming more and more the prevailing feeling of the country, in its relations at least with civilised States, 'Peace on earth, good will towards men.' More and more will he recognise that his is indeed the highest of all the services, that the army and navy are merely the necessary and honoured instruments which the nation keeps in reserve with which to meet unreason, if he who is the representative of reason shall unfortunately fail."

In order to render diplomacy fit to be the servant of the democracy, the same writer contends that there should be, in every place of political importance, a representative of this country, charged to send to the Foreign Office the most correct and early information on all important matters ; whilst at the Foreign Office this information should be digested and arranged, and made public as soon as circumstances would admit. Furthermore, every British embassy and mission should be "a centre of the best kind of British influence ;" our diplo-

matists should mix not merely in court society but amongst general politicians and men of letters in the places to which they are accredited, and should keep themselves less socially distinct as a class or as individuals in their own country.

No doubt these are directions in which great advances may be made. The Foreign Office, indeed, already discharges the functions here assigned to it, perhaps as ably and fully as the present conditions of diplomacy allow. In particular, the commercial and other reports of British consuls, periodically issued, are of extreme value both to the Government and to the public, whilst the Parliamentary Papers in general supply us with more purely diplomatic information—not perhaps with all possible haste, but with greater promptitude than is the case in any other European country.

With respect to the personal character and bearing of our representatives abroad, the need is not so much that the men holding the positions of ministers, secretaries of legation, consuls, and so forth, should take a more popular view of their calling as that a much wider field of selection should be travelled over in search of suitable candidates for nearly every branch of the profession. There is no apparent reason why diplomacy should not be a perfectly open career. There is at any rate little reason to doubt that it will be thrown open so soon as the hardihood of the democracy has had occasion to deal with it. That which would be necessary would be to secure that merit of every suitable kind should find entrance to the profession, and that the Government should never be precluded from selecting special agents and ministers for particular missions.

The foreign ministers of the United States are chosen in such a manner as to confer honour upon, and to utilise

in the public service, men distinguished in letters, or in social life, who are pre-eminently fitted to be vehicles of accurate information and international courtesy and good will. The system is understood to work well. It is far more liberal than our own ; and it might be worth while for our Government, in the exercise of the discretion which it actually possesses, to step more frequently out of the beaten track, not only in respect of vice-consuls and consuls, but also in the appointment of special representatives.

It is certain that the popularisation of the diplomatic and consular services in the directions indicated would add immensely to the confidence of the people in its government abroad. The popularisation of the home service will come as a matter of course with the perfection of the parliamentary system, and the thorough representation of the democracy. But, so far as our foreign policy is concerned, a satisfaction and relief not wholly attainable under existing conditions would be gained by diluting the traditional characteristics of these services with a greater admixture of fresh and unsophisticated talent, and by the employment for specific purposes of men whose thoughts and habits have not become narrowed in a groove.*

* A good instance of the value of this deviation is afforded in the mission of Mr Goschen to Constantinople in 1880. No doubt Mr Goschen had been trained in office, if not precisely as a diplomatist. And no doubt his employment was quite in accordance with precedent, especially with the precedents of the older English diplomacy—of good Bishop Robinson for example. But the despatch to Constantinople at such a crisis of a man whose life work had been finance, not diplomacy, was in some manner an innovation which produced very happy results. I do not refer so much to the settlement of the Greek question, which was (even if unreasonably) a disappointment to many Englishmen, as to the general effect upon the Porte of Mr Goschen's

With a settled disposition towards peace and retrenchment, with a spirit of enterprise checked only by the determination to be just, and with a network of representatives abroad whose function would be strictly limited to being the eyes and ears and touch of the Home Government, our English democracy may move forward in the path which is marked out for it. And perhaps it would be impossible more accurately and succinctly to clothe in words the nature of England's national destiny than by assigning to her as her great mission in the future the practice, the development, and the championship of Free Trade.

It is a noteworthy fact that the blind powers of reaction which (often with unwitting or unwary human instruments) have in these past years been sapping at the foundations of England's moral and commercial greatness have attacked, one after the other, all the main principles of her essentially national traditions. Our historical development has made us a free democracy, with a strictly limited royal prerogative and a virtual popular sovereignty. In 1876-8 the attempt was made to convert the royal into an imperial style, and the prerogative was on more than one occasion substituted for the authority of Parliament. The inclination of the democracy towards peace, and peaceful methods of diplomacy, had been

character and attitude. But in the Greek question also our representative acquitted himself as well as, or better than, we could have expected any member of the regular diplomatic profession to have done. The truth seems to be, that the ambassadors of four out of the six Powers developed at Constantinople a portentous and Turk-like stolidity, against which it is to the credit of Mr Goschen that he did so much for Greece, for English policy, and for civilisation. To him, with Mr Gladstone, Lord Granville, and Sir Charles Dilke, the Thessalians are especially indebted for their liberty.

emphatically declared both before and after the admission of the working-classes to the franchise; but Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury had threatened war and lavished menace. Our sympathy with oppressed races had never been stronger than it was shown to be in the seventh and eighth decades of this century; but the same two statesmen deliberately preferred to this sympathy a decaying party tradition. Retrenchment was manifestly in the intention of the people at large, though no mandate to retrench may have been given at the general election of 1874; and money was spent by the million on superfluous armaments and useless demonstrations. For all this the nation revindicated itself in 1880; and then, without long delay, the undermining process was renewed in an organised assault upon the last of all our traditions. The impeachment of Free Trade, distinctly encouraged by the Conservative chiefs, must be regarded as the closing phase of a five years' antagonism to the characteristic national traditions.

The attempt which is being made at this moment to reverse the commercial policy accepted by the country in 1846 can appear formidable only to those who do not realise the fact that this policy is the natural and necessary outcome of the tendencies of the nation, and that it is consequently an organic part of our popular constitution. The policy contended for by Cobden and Bright, adopted by Peel, sanctioned by statesmen of both parties and by the people as a whole, was no mere experiment tentatively put in operation, like an income tax or an army reform. It was a logical conclusion from unquestioned facts—an irreversible decision following after long deliberation. The Corn Importation Acts, the tariff reductions, the repeal of the Navigation Acts—all these steps from first to last were simple developments of the

national growth, and regular evolutions from predisposing causes. In brief, Free Trade is the legitimate offspring of freedom and of trade. In its lineaments are the features of both parents ; and it will hardly perish until Freedom, "grave mother of majestic works," drops the crown from her brow and the trident from her hand, and her isle-altars know her no more.

The definite adoption of the Free Trade policy not merely confirmed our commercial supremacy amongst the nations of the world—it consecrated the international feeling which had long been fostered by theorists and promoted by our most far-seeing statesmen. There was much to be done—there is much to be done at this day—before Englishmen can be brought candidly and practically to admit the equal rights of all States, and to cement the friendship of every nation, great and small, by removing every cause of irritation due to unwarrantable aggressions in the past. The mere insinuation that anything of this kind could be necessary on our part, even if such words as reparation and restitution were never employed, was once sufficient to raise a storm of adverse criticism ; but it is scarcely so any longer. The new generation has developed greater moral courage, and the English democracy both repudiates aggression and laughs at the idea that retrocession is of necessity a sign of weakness. It is now granted, at least in general terms, that the sway of England has been made to extend over sundry rocks and islands which are of no service to her, and that she might gain rather than lose strength by abandoning them.*

* "If (Cobden used to say) the Government would let me go to Spain with an offer to cede Gibraltar, on condition that its fortifications were razed or dismantled, I could get from the Spanish Government such a commercial treaty as would be of enormous advantage to

The men who fought the battle of the tariffs were men of statesmanlike breadth and foresight, and they were only following their own principles to their logical conclusions when they maintained that the nation must gain incalculably by every act of international conciliation and goodwill. Cobden was in the first place a mere Anti-Corn Law agitator; but before he died he was "the international man." It was not merely that his principles were

the English manufacturers and labourers, and would be an infinite boon to Spain. It would not be much to give away, for Gibraltar is of no value whatever as a check to the entrance into the Mediterranean." (Mr Thorold Rogers: "Cobden and Modern Political Opinion.") In 1862 Cobden's most intimate friend, Mr Bright, touched on this same question in a speech to his constituents; and the passage, striking enough in itself, gains immeasurably in significance by the lapse of nearly twenty years since the date of its utterance. "Suppose," said Mr Bright, "the English Government heard that Spain was equipping expeditions, by land and sea, for the purpose of retaking that fortress and rock. Now, although it is not of the slightest advantage to any Englishman living, excepting to those who have pensions and occupations upon it; although every Government knows it, and although more than one Government has been anxious to give it up, and I hope this Government will send my friend, Mr Cobden, to Madrid, with an offer that Gibraltar shall be ceded to Spain, as being of no use to this country, and only embittering, as statesmen have admitted, the relations between Spain and England—and if he were to go to Madrid with an offer of the Rock of Gibraltar, I believe he might obtain a commercial treaty with Spain that would admit every English manufacture, and every article of English produce into that country at a duty of not more than ten per cent. ;—I say, do you not think that, if you heard that Spain was about to retake that useless rock, mustering her legions and her fleets, the English Government would combine all the power of this country to resist it?" Can we feel sure that this question would at all times elicit an answer in the affirmative? And would it not be wise on the part of our statesmen, if at any time the opportunity seems to present itself, to perform a long-delayed act of reparation, the performance of which would redound to the profit as well as to the credit of England?

for all nations and ages. He was deeply penetrated by the belief that the welfare of all nations depended on the freedom and reciprocation of their intercourse. It was the fervour of this faith which led him to recommend and negotiate the Commercial Treaty with France, which was not so much a legitimate issue of the principles of 1846 as it was an enthusiastic realisation of his international creed. He looked forward with confidence to the immediate results of free trade—to the vast increase of imports and exports, to permanently cheap food, to the diminished frequency of famine, wholesale pauperisation, and financial panics, and to the wider distribution of natural wealth. But he looked for similar and even greater benefits from constant international approximations.

That which Cobden could scarcely venture to maintain, from tribune or platform, to the day of his death, without stamping himself as one of the most chimerical of men, is now an integral part of England's definitive national tradition.

With this our survey of England's policy, and of its traditions effete and effective, comes to an end. It has been no more than a rapid survey, and is not to be taken as settling, or attempting to settle, any one of the questions which have been passed in review. Its object will be attained if it may contribute to show on which of our national traditions the greatness of this country has been mainly built, and to which of them we ought chiefly to look for our future development. The conclusions arrived at may be briefly recapitulated.

The relations of England with foreign States have been for two centuries past in the hands of responsible Ministers, drawn alternately from the two political

parties, and answerable (1) to the monarch, (2) to the Estates of the Lords and Commons, and (3) to the general mass of the people.

The policy of these Ministers has been, on the whole, thoroughly patriotic in intention, and usually in accordance with the party traditions, handed down from generation to generation. But there have been Ministers in successive ages who have diverged from the strict traditions of their own party, either in the direction of a wish expressed by the monarch, or in obedience to a popular sentiment—declared sometimes within and sometimes without the walls of Parliament.

The party traditions have been based as a rule on certain notions as to the friendship or suspicion which England ought “naturally” to entertain towards particular Continental States; and they have resulted in periodical wars, combinations, and engagements of a more or less embarrassing kind, with the Great Powers of Europe.

Side by side with these party traditions there has always existed a body of tradition which has been characteristically national and popular—sometimes clearly defined, sometimes tacit or obscure—now in harmony with a party tradition, and again directly opposed to the policy of the Ministers in office.

Until very recently Englishmen have not had the opportunity of giving distinct expression to their general sentiment when it did not happen to coincide with the Ministerial policy or the party traditions. The enfranchisement of the middle classes in 1832, and of the working classes in 1867—combined with the increased power of the press, and the developments introduced by steam and electricity—has at length enabled the nation to pronounce and give effect to its sentiments.

The result of these changes has been to call the English democracy into existence as virtually the sovereign power in the State; and from this time forward we may expect to find that the feeling of the country, expressed through the medium of a cultivated and balanced public opinion, will prevail with rare exceptions over discarded party traditions, and (if necessary) over the judgment or the wishes of the "estates of the realm."

Finally, there is no reason for discouragement, but rather every reason for confidence, in this altered condition of things; because the popular traditions of Englishmen have been unmistakably shown to rest upon the principles of national industry and sympathy with freedom throughout the world.

The whole tendency of the English democracy is towards freedom and progress—not freedom and progress in this country alone, but wherever the influence of international goodwill can be brought to bear.

" So let the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that which flies,
And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

" A saying hard to shape in act;
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact."

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APPENDIX.

A.

(Page 119.)

ON the appeal of Spain for England's mediation in 1822, Canning instructed our representative at Paris to acquaint the French Government with this fact. He was to admit that the concessions offered by Spain were not completely satisfactory; but, in making this admission, he was to point out "the peculiar circumstances under which it was written; for although the more enlightened part of the Government, and of the Cortes of Spain, did not believe the Constitution to be in all its parts usefully and permanently practicable," yet could it reasonably be expected that they would declare their readiness to yield to foreign dictation? "Let M. de Chateaubriand," said Canning to the Ambassador, "ask of himself, as we in England have asked of ourselves, whether, if there existed in the frame of the Government of France, or of England, respectively, all those imperfections which either theoretical criticism or factious clamour imputes to them, we should consent, even if we were already resolved to probe and to reform those imperfections, to do so on the demand of a foreign Power, made under the menace of foreign war, as the penalty of refusal. . . . Let M. de Chateaubriand further ask himself whether, even by the mode of making that demand, that part of the Spanish Government or nation which might be willing to undertake those ameliorations of the present Constitution of Spain, without which it is alleged to be unsafe to her neighbours, has not been placed in a situation of great difficulty. The Cabinet of France, as well as that of England, must know enough of the course of popular Governments and of the influence of popular parties to be aware that a proposition, even upon indifferent matters, thrown loose before the public at the same time that it is submitted to the Government is one of which the Government is no longer master. How much more so when that proposition is of a nature to appeal to the strongest passions of mankind,—to pride, to resentment, to

patriotism,—and, consequently, to array and exasperate all those passions against a decision which could only be expected from the calmest temper and most deliberate reflection ? Is it not plain that the same proposition completely changes its nature according to the manner in which it is brought forward ? And that a proposition which, if submitted through the regular channels of diplomacy, to a Sovereign or to a Cabinet, might be matter of wholesome advice or amicable remonstrance, when addressed to the mass of a nation aloud, and in the presence of all the world, becomes a taunt and a defiance ? The publication of the despatch to M. la Garde, while it was yet on its road to Madrid, was defended by the alleged necessity of tranquillising the public mind at Paris ; but if there was a public mind at Paris requiring to be tranquillised there was a public mind at Madrid liable to be inflamed ; and if it was so desirable for the Cabinet of the Tuilleries to carry with them the general sense and feeling of the French people, how tremendous was the task imposed upon the Government of Spain, when a concession was extracted from them such as the strongest Government would find it difficult to make, and when they were at the same moment deprived of the opportunity of preparing and reconciling (if that had been their wish) the feelings of the people of Spain to that concession ?” These observations were not made with a view to inculcate the French Government, but merely for the purpose of reminding de Chateaubriand “of the situation in which the French Ministers had placed themselves towards Spain, by the manner in which their first alternative for war had been propounded ; and of impressing upon them the necessity of not omitting any opportunity, however little promising they might deem it, for again stating to Spain, the grounds of their dissatisfaction and the nature of their demands.” The remainder of the instruction was employed in endeavouring to convince the French Government of the small likelihood of their securing by war the objects which they professed to seek by it.—(*As quoted by Stapleton : “Political Life of Canning.”*)

B.

(Page 125.)

The Royal Message drafted by Canning and delivered by him to the House of Commons on Dec. 11th, 1826, was as follows:—

“George R.—His Majesty acquaints the House of Commons that His Majesty has received an earnest application from the Princess Regent of Portugal, claiming, in virtue of the ancient obligations of alliance and amity between His Majesty and the Crown of Portugal, His Majesty’s aid against an hostile aggression from Spain. His Majesty has exerted himself for some time past, in conjunction with His Majesty’s Ally, the King of France, to prevent such an aggression, and repeated assurances have been given by the Court of Madrid of the determination of His Catholic Majesty, neither to commit, nor to allow to be committed, from His Catholic Majesty’s territory, any aggression against Portugal ; but His Majesty has learned, with deep concern, that notwithstanding these assurances, hostile inroads into the territory of Portugal have been concerted in Spain, and have been executed under the eyes of Spanish Authorities, by Portuguese Regiments, which had deserted into Spain, and which the Spanish Government had repeatedly and solemnly engaged to disarm and to disperse. His Majesty leaves no effort unexhausted to awaken the Spanish Government to the dangerous consequences of this connivance. His Majesty makes this communication to the House of Commons with the full and entire confidence that his faithful Commons will afford to His Majesty their cordial concurrence and support in maintaining the faith of treaties, and in securing against foreign hostility the safety and independence of the Kingdom of Portugal, the oldest ally of Great Britain.

G. R.”

C.

(Page 128.)

Mr Stapleton, in his "Life of Canning," thus summarises the arguments by which that statesman defended his recognition of the revolted colonies of Spain :—

First, it was a measure essentially advantageous to British interests ; being especially calculated to benefit our commerce. Next, it enabled this country to remain at peace, since it compensated us for the continued occupation of Spain by a French force,—a disparagement to which, otherwise, it would not have become us to submit. Lastly, it maintained the balance between conflicting principles ; since it gave just as much of a triumph to popular rights and privileges as was sufficient to soothe the irritation felt by their advocates at the victory which absolute principles had obtained by the overthrow of the constitutions of Spain, Portugal, and Naples ; and it dealt a death-blow to the Holy Alliance, by disabusing its members of the strange fancy with which they were prepossessed, that "the differences between them and the British Ministers (where they did differ) were merely feints on the part of the latter to avoid a conflict with public opinion."

With regard to the first : the extensive commercial transactions between Great Britain and the Spanish Colonies from 1808 to 1825 are a sufficient proof of the magnitude of the interests which were at stake. It could not, however, be expected that a trade so considerable, with such countries, could be carried on without the merchants concerned in it meeting occasionally with some grievances of which they had cause to complain. The authority of Spain was extinguished in almost all of the ports of the Spanish main. If British merchants were aggrieved, there was no authority to which Great Britain could apply for redress ; those possessing the legitimate power, being wholly unable to grant it, and those possessing the *de facto* power not being recognised as Governments, could not be called upon to remedy evils for which, while unrecognised, they could not be held to be responsible. The recognition, therefore, of those *de facto* Governments, which had the means of protecting the trade carried on with their subjects, gave a security to that trade which must necessarily have been highly advantageous to the individuals who were engaged in it,

since security is one of the first essentials of commerce. With regard to the second : the occupation of Spain by France being prolonged indefinitely was undoubtedly a disparagement to this country, because it disturbed the balance of power in a manner which, if Spain had been the Spain of former days, would have been exactly similar to that which Great Britain had twice before exerted her whole force to prevent. If Mr Canning, therefore, abstained from either making a "direct attack upon France," or "undertaking a war upon the soil of Spain," it was because he saw, not only that the "possession" of that country might "be rendered harmless in rival hands—harmless as regarded us, and valueless to the possessors,"—but that compensation might be obtained by conferring a recognised political existence on the different countries of the Spanish Indies ; so that if France occupied Spain, it should not be "Spain *with* the Indies." With regard to the last : the demonstration of the fact that, because the Spanish American Governments were the offspring of rebellion, and republican in their form, Great Britain would not be prevented from entering with these Governments into treaties of amity and commerce, provided that other circumstances prescribed the fitness of such a course, was an exact counterpoise to the Holy Alliance in refusing to continue diplomatic relations with the constitutional Government of Spain, because that form of government was not the free gift of the Spanish monarch. Moreover, the Holy Alliance was virtually dissolved by the measure ; for from that time forth the intimate union between its members ceased to exist, and they no longer continued to act together upon the same principles.

D.

(Page 128.)

The following passages are taken from Canning's speech in the House of Commons, on affording aid to Portugal, Dec. 12, 1826 :—

“ Amongst the alliances by which, at different periods, this country has been connected with the other nations of Europe, there is none so old, so constant, so precise in obligations, or so intimately interwoven with the most brilliant periods of the history of this country, as the alliance between Great Britain and the crown of Portugal. It dates back to distant centuries ; it has survived every great conflict. It is much older than the epoch to which I am about to advert, but it received its greatest vigour when the present royal family of Portugal was seated on its throne. The house of Braganza was placed at the head of an independent monarchy at the instance and by the friendship of Great Britain. The connexion between the two kingdoms has been continued, renewed, and maintained, under every difficulty ; it has been adhered to in periods when the faith of other alliances has been shaken ; it has been vindicated in those fields of blood and glory which remain among the most brilliant pages of the history of England. Sir, in that alliance we have always been scrupulously faithful. It may sometimes have been burthensome to England, and there may even now be those who wish to shake it off ; but a feeling growing out of national faith, a feeling of common interest, a sympathy between the two countries, must, upon consideration, convince everybody of the comparative advantages and obligations of this alliance. It is not wholly, however, at distant periods, it is not altogether amongst ages long gone by, that traces of this union are to be found. In the latest compact of modern Europe, that which now forms the patent law of the nations of the world—I mean the Convention of Vienna—this country, with its eyes open to all the inconveniences of the connexion, but with its memory full of all its benefits, and with all the feelings belonging to them, renewed solemnly the previously existing obligations. This it did in terms so strong that there is no possibility of violating them without the most disgraceful breach of national honour. . . . It was only this morning that I received intelligence announcing that the whole of the constituted authorities in Portugal were most anxious for the presence of the British troops,

and that both the Chambers had been unanimous upon the subject. Sir W. A'Court, from whom the information came, stated in his despatch, dated the 29th of November, that the day after the news arrived of the entry of the rebels into Villa Seca, application was made by the ministers for British aid, upon the faith of ancient treaties; the deputies, in a body, gave their assent; and the peers, rising from their seats, were to a man unanimous upon the subject; and the Duke of Carhaval described them as all ready to offer every assistance, either personal or otherwise, in their power. Sir W. A'Court's informant stated that the feeling displayed upon the occasion was worthy of the good days of Portugal. The question of the reception of our troops being arranged, it came next to be considered whether the *casus fœderis* had arrived. Now, it is clear that bands of armed Portuguese, armed and equipped by Spain, had crossed the Portuguese frontiers, not in one place, but at several points. One incursion had been made at Tras-os-Montes, and others at different other points. It certainly is possible that some slight aggression might have been committed by a few discontented persons or stragglers at a single point, without creating much alarm; but when an attack was made in this way upon a whole line of frontier, no doubt could be entertained of the nature and object of the aggression. It is true, it would be more undoubted if a single Spaniard had crossed the frontier with a hostile feeling. But the question with the British Government was this—is there less hostility in a Portuguese army crossing the frontier, when avowedly in the pay and service of Spain? The incursion, then, by persons nurtured on the soil was at the instigation and by the support of foreigners. It is therefore idle to say that it is not in truth and in fact a foreign invasion. It is true that Spain has not availed herself of her own or other mercenaries, but she has made use of the mercenaries of Portugal itself. I have already stated that it was not his Majesty's intention to interfere with the internal regulations of Portugal; that is a question which they must settle amongst themselves. But there is a wide distinction between her internal regulations and foreign aggressions upon her. And when bands of armed refugees, confessedly supported by a foreign power, break in upon her peace and quiet, it would be a laxity in politics and a solecism in morality for which we should be justly condemned by this House, if we denied to interfere. The question, as it appears to me, is this—there is a treaty, not framed in a corner, but openly avowed to the world—a treaty, known and acknowledged to other courts; and I am sure that neither can his Majesty refuse to

act in accordance with it, nor can the House of Commons consistently refuse to support his Majesty in maintaining the national honour and character, and giving effect to these treaties. This is the case upon which I stand; and I put it without reference to any collateral points, because I wish to be clearly understood by those to whom this statement will find its way. But I have something to add, to which I beg the attention of the House. When I call for the aid of this House and the country in favour of Portugal, it is not to be understood that I call upon it to go to war with Spain. I beg honourable gentlemen to bear this in mind; and further to understand, that though I think the conduct of Spain unneighbour-like, nay, even contrary to the laws of God and man, still I do not mean to insinuate that there is no compunction, no *locus pœnitentiæ*, no possibility of redress, no hope of retracing their steps on the part of that nation. Sir, I say no such thing; but I do say that it is our duty to fly to the defence of Portugal, be the assailant who he may. I now come to the question of who is the assailant. Sir, the present state of Portugal is so unusual in the history of nations, its history is crowded with events so extraordinary, that I hope I shall not be considered as unnecessarily wasting the time of the House if I enter shortly, and as succinctly as possible, into a detail of a few of its leading facts, and their effects upon the present position of Europe. It is generally known that the king of Portugal was anxious to raise Brazil from a colony to metropolitan condition, and that upon his Majesty's return to Portugal that colony became anxious to achieve her independence, and it was apprehended that the two crowns would be separated. The king of Portugal therefore determined to settle the sovereignty of Brazil upon his eldest son. This was hardly done, the ink with which the deed was made out was hardly dried, when the premature death of the king of Portugal again united both crowns upon one head. The advice of this country, and another nation connected with Brazil, was tendered upon the occasion, and not before the king of Portugal had determined to abdicate the crown of Portugal in favour of his eldest daughter. This abdication was accompanied with the offer of a free constitutional charter. It was stated that this had been done by the advice of Great Britain. It was no such thing—England gave no such advice; not because ministers approved or disapproved of such a measure, but because they felt that it formed no part of the duty of an English ministry to interfere with the internal regulations of that or any other country. It is certainly true that that charter was brought from Brazil by a gentleman who has filled,

and continues to fill, an office of high trust from this country. Sir Charles Stewart happened to be at Brazil at that time, and he was requested by the king of Portugal to take that charter to Lisbon as he was returning home. Sir Charles Stewart did bring it to Portugal; but no blame whatever attached to that gentleman in consequence of having done so. But he was ordered to return to England, in order to prevent the suspicion that that charter was advised by British councils or supported by British agency. With respect to that charter, I do not feel called upon to give an opinion—I certainly entertain an opinion upon it; but as an English minister, all I shall say is, May God prosper that attempt at the extension of constitutional liberty; and may the nation to which it is extended prove as fit to receive and cherish it as she is to discharge her other duties amongst the other nations of Europe! It is impossible that we can desert our ancient allies—but at the same time it is impossible that we could support the Portuguese if there existed a schism amongst the constituted authorities. We do, however, go to Portugal in faith of our treaty; when there, we shall do nothing forcibly; but we shall, at the same time, take care that nothing is done by other nations to prevent the freest action of the constitution there established. So much I have felt it necessary to say relative to the case of Portugal; internally it is not our intention to interfere with that country, but external violence shall not be used against her while Great Britain has the power to wield an arm in her defence. . . . I set out with saying there were many reasons which induced me to think that nothing short of a point of national faith or national honour—I will not say, would justify, but would make desirable, any approximation to the possibility of a dangerous war. Let me be understood, however, distinctly as not meaning that I dread a war in a good cause (and in no other may it be the lot of this country to engage!) from a distrust of the strength of the country to commence it, or of her resources to maintain it. I dread it indeed, but upon far other grounds; I dread it from a consciousness of the tremendous power Great Britain possesses of pushing hostilities in which she may be engaged to consequences which I shudder to contemplate. Some years ago, in the discussion of the negotiations with Spain, I took the liberty of adverting to a topic of this nature—that the position of this country was one of neutrality, not only between contending nations, but between contending principles; and that it was in the position of neutrality alone we could maintain that balance the preservation of which I believed to be essential to the peace and safety of the world.

Four years' experience (it is now more than three years and a half from that date) has confirmed rather than altered my opinion. I fear that the next war to be kindled in Europe, if it spread beyond the narrow limits of Spain and Portugal, will be a war of a most tremendous character—a war not merely of conflicting armies, but of conflicting opinions. I know that if into that war this country enters (and if she do engage, I trust it will be with a most sincere desire to mitigate rather than exasperate, and to contend with arms rather than with the more fatal artillery of popular excitation), she will see under her banners, arrayed for the contest, all the discontented and restless spirits of the age—all those who, whether justly or unjustly, are dissatisfied with the present state of their own countries. The consciousness of such a situation excites all my fears; for it shows that there exists a power, to be wielded by Great Britain, more tremendous than was, perhaps, ever yet brought into action in the history of mankind. But though it may be 'excellent to have a giant's strength,' it may be 'tyrannous to use it like a giant.' The knowledge that we possess this strength is our security; and our business is not to seek opportunities of displaying it, but by a partial and half-shown exhibition of it to make it felt that it is the interest of exaggerators, on both sides, to shrink from converting their umpire into their competitor. The situation of this country may be compared to that of the ruler of the winds, as described by the poet:—

— Celsa sedet Æolus arce
Sceptra tenens; mollitque animos et temperat iras :
Ni faciat, maria ac terras cœlumque profundum
Quippe ferant rapidi secum, verrantque per auras.

The consequence of letting loose the passions at present chained and confined would be the production of a scene of desolation which no man can contemplate without horror; and I should not sleep easy on my couch if I thought by a single moment I had precipitated it. This, then, is the reason—a reason the reverse of fear—a reason the contrary of disability—why I dread the recurrence of a war. That this reason may be felt by those who are acting on opposite principles, before the time for using our power shall arrive, I would bear much, and I would forbear long; I would almost put up with anything that did not touch our national faith and national honour, rather than let slip the furies of war, the leash of which is in our hands, while we know not whom they may reach, and doubt where the devastation may end. Such is the love of peace which the British

Government acknowledges, and such the duty of peace which the circumstances of the world inculcate. In obedience to this conviction, and with the hope of avoiding extremities, I will push no farther the topics of this part of the address. Let us defend Portugal, whoever may be the assailants, because it is a work of duty; and let us end where that duty ends. We go to Portugal, not to rule, not to govern, not to dictate, not to prescribe—but to plant our standard, and to secure her independence. Where the standard of England is planted, there foreign dominion shall not come.”

In reply to some observations from Hume and others, Canning said:—“I candidly admit that I have understated the case against Spain. I have done so purposely and designedly, and I warned the House that I did so, wishing to attack no more of the conduct of Spain than was sufficient to establish a *casus fœderis*, and not to attack so much of it as would have rendered it absolutely impossible to avoid a war, which the full statement of the case would have done. An amendment has been made, and it has been justified by a reference to a declaration which I made some years ago, when I stated that it would be exceedingly onerous for this country to engage in war. The difference between the two cases, upon which I ground the difference of conduct, is that in the one instance I maintained that war was to be avoided when we were not obliged to engage in it; whereas in the present case I say that unless it can be averted by seasonable demonstrations on the part of this country, war cannot be avoided.” He could not, without giving to hostilities that tremendous character which ought to be avoided, agree to the repeal of the Foreign Enlistment Act, although such a retaliation would be perfectly justifiable. With regard to the withdrawal of the French troops from Spain, it did not at all affect the present question. “I most sincerely believe that the exertions of France are directed to the preservation of existing treaties; and it is my conviction that if the army was withdrawn, party rage would reassume its desperate character, and that class, avowedly the least in numbers, would become its victims.” He denied that the position of England was affected by the French occupation of Spain. He did not believe that this was that Spain of which our ancestors were so justly jealous—that Spain upon whose territories it was proudly boasted that the sun never set. The balance of power had been greatly altered in the course of a century. “If we have for the present been dispossessed of anything in our situation as forming part of the balance of power, we have been fully compensated. Was it necessary to blockade Cadiz to restore the situ-

ation of England ? No. I looked at the possessions of Spain on the other side of the Atlantic ; I looked at the Indies, and I called in the New World to redress the balance of the Old. This, then, is my answer—France has gained no advantage, obtained no power ; Spain is become to her a source of unpalliated and unmitigated evil ; I believe she would be glad of anything which would help her out of the difficulty in which she has placed herself ; I believe she would be thankful to us for any interference which would tend to relieve her of her unprofitable accession ; but it is our present policy to rivet her in her bondage, and make it with her a point of honour. I feel bound to express my sense of the support which has been so generally, and with such gratifying language, bestowed upon his Majesty's Government in this emergency. I repeat again that our object is not war ; our object is, to be enabled to take the most effective measures for the preservation of peace."

E.

(Page 139.)

In the instructions given by Canning to the Duke of Wellington on the departure of the latter for St Petersburg, the Foreign Minister wrote :—

“ It was to be hoped that the renewal of the Conferences would not be proposed by any one. No Power except Prussia had recently adverted to it as within the scope of reasonable expectation. But Prussia having no contact with Turkey, and no intercourse with Greece, had no more interest than any of the remotest Powers of Europe in the question at issue. The object of the British Government was to avoid the fruitless and perplexing process of a Conference ; and for this end there was perhaps no more convenient mode than by multiplying the conditions which alone would induce the British Ministry to allow a British Plenipotentiary to attend. The conditions which Great Britain had already invariably required were :—1. The complete re-establishment of the Russian Mission at Constantinople. 2. An abjuration by all parties concerned of any employment of force against either Greeks or Turks. To these were then to be added, 3. An abjuration by all and each of the intervening parties of any views of aggrandisement or peculiar advantage to be derived to themselves either from the success or the failure of the intervention. But if Great Britain further insisted, as it was but reasonable to do, that the King of the Netherlands, the Maritime Power next in importance in Europe to England and France, should likewise be invited to take part in any Conference to be held on a question so nearly touching maritime interests ; and further, if she required (as had been already proposed by Prince Metternich), 4. That the seat of the Conference should be London ; the result would probably be either that the proposal would be got rid of altogether through the separate objections of different Powers to the several conditions annexed to it, or that, if, contrary to all expectation, all parties should waive their objections for the sake of obtaining British co-operation, the British Government would at least afford that co-operation on their own terms. England would then go into a Conference wholly different in character from those against whose decisions she had twice had to protest in the face

of the world, and the British Ministers would have an account of the principles and intentions of that Conference to render which might be rendered without disguise not only to the parties whose interests were discussed, but to the British Parliament and nation. It could not be supposed—it was in truth utterly hopeless—that such a Conference would be able to settle the disputes of Turkey and Greece. But it would have a better chance of so doing than a Conference consisting of five Powers, of whom one (Russia) would be in a state bordering on hostility to the Turks; another (Austria) virtually and in conduct their Ally; the third (France) involved in complicated intrigues alike with Greece and with Egypt; the fourth (Prussia) only either the instigator or the abettor of violent counsels in Russia; and England paralysed in her endeavours to do good by the conflicting interests and passions of her Allies.” Dismissing, therefore, the notion of a Conference, Canning reverted to the consideration of a confidential concert between Great Britain and Russia. “In such concert there was little or no difficulty to be apprehended from the Greeks. They had already thrown themselves upon the aid of England so confidently that she had only to name the terms of her interference. If, therefore, Mr Stratford Canning’s attempt at separate intervention should have failed, it was unlikely that in their then state they would reject the only remaining hope of extrication from their dangers by refusing to admit Russia into the mediation. But if the offer of the joint intervention of England and Russia should be rejected by the Porte, the next point to be considered was, what course England would adopt herself, and what she would recommend to Russia to pursue? In solving this question, it was necessary to ask, however England might deny the right of Russia to go to war, what probability there was of preventing it? Prevention could only be effected—1. Either by a combination with Austria and France, or, 2. by the single admonition of Great Britain to Russia, that she would not see the Turkish Power destroyed. As to the first mode, France had distinctly avowed that she could not tolerate a division of Turkey like that of Poland, by which Russia and Austria alone should be the sharers. Austria, too, feared hostilities between Russia and Turkey. But both France and Austria might be looking to become partakers in the spoils, and their opposition might cease so soon as Russia was successful. Thus the task of resistance to Russia would devolve on England alone; and if the Sultan’s throne were laid prostrate England might be involved in war, not only with Russia but with the other Continental Powers. As to the latter mode, would it be sound policy for Great Britain

singly to undertake the defence of the Porte ? and would her Government have been supported by Parliament in such a war, Russia espousing (as in that event she would) the cause of the unhappy Greeks ? In 1791 the Parliament refused to interpose to arrest the progress of Russia towards Turkey, and that before the struggles of the Greeks for their independence had excited the sympathies of the English public. On the other hand, if Russia were to mingle in the fray, would it be possible for England long to preserve that even-handed neutrality which would probably end in the partition of the Turkish Empire, and in a general contest for the spoils ? It was therefore well worth while to consider whether, in the hopelessness of avoiding altogether an ultimate participation in those consequences, the British Government might not, in perfect consistency with the principles which it had thus far professed, take some active measure which, by restraining the excesses of the existing war between Turkey and the Greeks, might force upon the former that disposition to accommodation which would afford the best, if not the only, chance of producing a change in the warlike counsels of the Russian Emperor."

F.

(Page 166.)

It was in June 1844 that the Czar Nicholas visited England, and endeavoured to come to an understanding with the Government. Mr Kinglake (*"Invasion of the Crimea,"* vol. i.) refers to this visit in the following terms. The Czar, he says, "evidently meeting with no encouragement, covered his retreat by giving in his adhesion to England's accustomed policy, and to do this with the better effect he left in our Foreign Office a solemn declaration not only of his own policy but likewise, strange to say, of the policy of Austria; and all this he blended in a somewhat curious manner with words which might be read as importing that his views had obtained the sanction of the English Government. But it must be certain that the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Aberdeen refrained, as it is the custom of our statesmen to do, from all hypothetical engagements."—The substance of the paper here referred to is as follows:—

"Russia and England are mutually penetrated with the conviction that it is for their common interest that the Ottoman Porte should maintain itself in a state of independence and of territorial possession which at present constitutes that empire, as that political combination is the one which is most compatible with the general interest and the maintenance of peace. Being agreed on this principle, Russia and England have an equal interest in uniting their efforts in order to keep up the existence of the Ottoman Empire, and to avert all the dangers which can place in jeopardy its safety. With this object, the essential point is to suffer the Porte to live in repose, without needlessly disturbing it by diplomatic bickerings, and without interfering, without absolute necessity, in its internal affairs. In order to carry out skilfully this system of forbearance, with a view to the well-understood interest of the Porte, two things must not be lost sight of. They are these:—In the first place, the Porte has a constant tendency to extricate itself from the engagements imposed upon it by the treaties which it has concluded with other Powers. It hopes to do so with impunity, because it reckons on the mutual jealousy of the Cabinets. It thinks that if it fails in its engagements towards one of them, the rest will espouse its quarrel, and will screen

it from all responsibility. It is essential not to confirm the Porte in this delusion. Every time that it fails in its obligations towards one of the Great Powers, it is the interest of all the rest to make it sensible of its error, and seriously exhort it to act rightly towards the Cabinet which demands just reparation. The object for which Russia and England will have to come to an understanding may be expressed in the following manner:—1. To seek to maintain the existence of the Ottoman Empire in its present state, so long as that political combination shall be possible. 2. If we foresee that it must crumble to pieces, to enter into previous concert as to everything relating to the establishment of a new order of things, intended to replace that which now exists, and, in conjunction with each other, to see that the change which may have occurred in the internal situation of that empire shall not injuriously affect either the security of their own States, and the rights which the treaties assure them respectively, or the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe. For the purpose thus stated, the policy of Russia and Austria . . . is closely united by the principle of perfect identity. If England as the principal maritime Power acts in concert with them, it is to be supposed that France will find herself obliged to act in conformity with the course agreed upon between St Petersburg, London, and Vienna. Conflict between the Great Powers being thus obviated, it is to be hoped that the peace of Europe will be maintained even in the midst of such serious circumstances.”

G.

(Page 173.)

The following despatch was sent by Lord John Russell to Sir James Hudson, Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of the King of Sardinia, on October 27, 1860 :—

"SIR,—It appears that the late proceedings of the King of Sardinia have been strongly disapproved of by several of the principal Courts of Europe. The Emperor of the French, on hearing of the invasion of the Papal States by the army of General Cialdini, withdrew his Minister from Turin, expressing at the same time the opinion of the Imperial Government in condemnation of the invasion of the Roman territory. The Emperor of Russia has, we are told, declared in strong terms his indignation at the entrance of the army of the King of Sardinia into the Neapolitan territory, and has withdrawn his entire mission from Turin. The Prince Regent of Prussia has also thought it necessary to convey to Sardinia a sense of his displeasure; but he has not thought it necessary to remove the Prussian Minister from Turin. After these diplomatic acts, it would scarcely be just to Italy, or respectful to the other Great Powers of Europe, were the Government of Her Majesty any longer to withhold the expression of their opinions. In so doing, however, Her Majesty's Government have no intention to raise a dispute upon the reasons which have been given, in the name of the King of Sardinia, for the invasion of the Roman and Neapolitan States. Whether or no the Pope was justified in defending his authority by means of foreign levies; whether the King of the Two Sicilies, while still maintaining his flag at Capua and Gaeta, can be said to have abdicated—are not the arguments upon which Her Majesty's Government propose to dilate. The large questions which appear to them to be at issue are these :—Were the people of Italy justified in asking the assistance of the King of Sardinia to relieve them from Governments with which they are discontented, and was the King of Sardinia justified in furnishing the assistance of his arms to the people of the Roman and Neapolitan States? There appear to have been two motives which have induced the people of the Roman and Neapolitan States to have joined willingly in the subversion of their Governments. The first of these was that the Governments of the Pope and the King of the Two

Sicilies provided so ill for the administration of justice, the protection of personal liberty, and the general welfare of the people, that their subjects looked forward to the overthrow of their rulers as a necessary preliminary to all improvements in their condition. The second motive was that a conviction had spread since the year 1849 that the only manner in which Italians could secure their independence of foreign control was by forming one strong Government for the whole of Italy. The struggle of Charles Albert in 1848, and the sympathy which the present King of Sardinia has shown for the Italian cause, have naturally caused the association of the name of Victor Emmanuel with the single authority under which the Italians aspire to live. Looking at the question in this view, Her Majesty's Government must admit that the Italians themselves are the best judges of their own interests. That eminent jurist Vattel, when discussing the lawfulness of the assistance given by the United Provinces to the Prince of Orange when he invaded England and overturned the throne of James II., says: 'The authority of the Prince of Orange had doubtless an influence on the deliberation of the States-General, but it did not lead them to the commission of an act of injustice; for when a people from good reasons take up arms against an oppressor, it is but an act of justice and generosity to assist brave men in the defence of their liberties.' Therefore according to Vattel, the question resolves itself into this:—Did the people of Naples and of the Roman States take up arms against their Governments for good reasons? Upon this grave matter Her Majesty's Government hold that the people in question are themselves the best judges of their own affairs. Her Majesty's Government do not feel justified in declaring that the people of Southern Italy had not good reasons for throwing off their allegiance to their former Government; Her Majesty's Government cannot, therefore, pretend to blame the King of Sardinia for assisting them. There remains, however a question of fact. It is asserted by the partisans of the fallen Governments that the people of the Roman States were attached to the Pope, and the people of the kingdom of Naples to the dynasty of Francis II., but that Sardinian agents and foreign adventurers have by force and intrigue subverted the thrones of those Sovereigns. It is difficult, however, to believe, after the astonishing events that have been seen, that the Pope and the King of the Two Sicilies possessed the love of their people. How was it, one must ask, that the Pope found it impossible to levy a Roman army, and that he was forced to rely almost entirely on foreign mercenaries? How did it happen, again, that Garibaldi conquered

nearly all Sicily with 2000 men, and marched from Reggio to Naples with 5000! How but from the universal disaffection of the people of the Two Sicilies? Neither can it be said that this testimony of the popular will was capricious or causeless. Forty years ago the Neapolitan people made an attempt regularly and temperately to reform their Government under a reigning dynasty. The Powers of Europe assembled at Laybach resolved, with the exception of England, to put down this attempt by force. It was put down, and a large foreign army of occupation was left in the Two Sicilies to maintain social order. In 1848, the Neapolitan people again attempted to secure liberty under the Bourbon dynasty, but their best patriots atoned by an imprisonment of ten years for the offence of endeavouring to free their country. What wonder, then, that in 1860 the Neapolitan mistrust and resentment should throw off the Bourbons, as in 1688 England had thrown off the Stuarts? It must be admitted, undoubtedly, that the severance of the ties which bind together a Sovereign and his subjects is in itself a misfortune. Notions of allegiance become confused; the succession to the Throne is disputed; adverse parties threaten the peace of society; rights and pretensions are opposed to each other and mar the harmony of the State. Yet it must be acknowledged, on the other hand, that the Italian revolution has been conducted with singular temper and forbearance. The subversion of existing power has not been followed, as is too often the case, by an outburst of popular vengeance. The extreme views of democrats have nowhere prevailed. Public opinion has checked the excesses of public triumph. The venerated forms of Constitutional Monarchy have been associated with the name of a Prince who represents an ancient and glorious dynasty. Such have been the causes and concomitant circumstances of the revolution of Italy. Her Majesty's Government can see no sufficient ground for the severe censure with which Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia have visited the acts of the King of Sardinia. Her Majesty's Government will turn their eyes rather to the gratifying prospect of a people building up the edifice of their liberties, and consolidating the work of their independence, amid the sympathies and good wishes of Europe.—I am, &c.,

(Signed) "J. RUSSELL."

H.

(Page 207.)

ARTICLES 11-14 and 19 of the Treaty of Paris, relating to the neutralisation of the Black Sea, run as follows :

"11. The Black Sea is neutralised ; its waters and ports, open to the mercantile marine of all nations, are formally and for ever closed to the war ships of the Powers on the coasts, as well as of every other Power, saving the exceptions mentioned in articles 14 and 19 of the present treaty.

"12. Commerce in the ports and waters of the Black Sea, freed from every kind of restraint, shall be subject only to regulations of health, customs, and police, drawn up in a spirit favourable to the development of commercial transactions. In order to give desirable security to the commercial and maritime interests of all nations, Russia and the Sublime Porte shall admit consuls into their ports on the shore of the Black Sea, in conformity with the principles of international right.

"13. The Black Sea being neutralised, as stated in article 11, the maintenance or establishment on its coasts of naval arsenals becomes unnecessary and purposeless. Therefore His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias and His Imperial Majesty the Sultan undertake not to construct or retain any naval arsenal on these coasts.

"14. Their Majesties the Emperor of All the Russias and the Sultan having concluded an agreement with the view of determining the force and number of the vessels of light burden necessary for their coast-service, which they reserve to themselves the right of maintaining in the Black Sea, this agreement is annexed to the present treaty, and shall have the same force and value as if it formed an integral part thereof. It cannot be either annulled or modified without the consent of the signatory Powers of the present treaty.

"19. In order to insure the execution of the regulations which shall have been laid down by common consent, in accordance with the principles declared above [in articles 15-18 relating to the navigation of the Danube] each of the contracting Powers shall have the right of stationing at all times two vessels of light burden at the mouths of the Danube."

Prince Gortchakoff's Circular to the Powers, rejecting the Treaty of

1856, was dated October 31, 1870. After referring to several facts which seemed to the Russian Government to have greatly modified the circumstances in which Russia assented to the Treaty, the Circular proceeds as follows :—

"Our august Master cannot admit that treaties violated in their essential and general clauses should continue to be binding in those clauses which affect the direct interests of his empire. His Imperial Majesty cannot admit, in fact, that the security of Russia should rest upon a fiction which has not withstood the ordeal of time, and that it should be endangered in consequence of his respect towards engagements which have not been performed in all their integrity. Relying on the sense of equity of the Powers signatories of the Treaty of 1856, and the consciousness these have of their own dignity, the Emperor bids you declare that his Imperial Majesty can no longer consider himself bound to the terms of the Treaty of March 18, 1856, in so far as these limit his rights of sovereignty in the Black Sea. That his Imperial Majesty considers it his right and his duty to give notice to his Majesty the Sultan of his withdrawal from the special and additional convention annexed to that treaty, which fixes the number and the size of the men-of-war which the two Powers bordering on the Black Sea reserve to keep in the said sea. That he conveys full information of this to the Powers and guarantors signatories of the general treaty, of which the special treaty is an integral part. That in this respect he replaces the Sultan in full possession of all his rights in the same manner as he reclaims his own. In the discharge of this duty, you will be careful to state that our august master has no other object in all this besides the security and dignity of his Empire. It is by no means the intention of his Imperial Majesty to revive the Eastern question. On this, as on all other points, he harbours no other wish than the maintenance and consolidation of peace. He entirely adheres otherwise to the general principles of the Treaty of 1856, which have established the position of Turkey in the European concert. He is prepared to come to an understanding with the Powers who signed the Treaty, either with a view to confirm the general stipulations, to renew them, or to substitute for them any other arrangement which may seem equitable and calculated to ensure the peace of the East and the European balance of power. His Majesty is convinced that this peace and this balance of power will receive an additional guarantee by being laid on more just and solid basis than those arising from a position which no great Power could accept as a natural condition of existence."

Lord Granville replied to this Circular on November 10, pointing out that the independent action of Russia was such as would weaken the force of all treaties ; and none the less because Prince Gortchakoff had affirmed that his Government were willing to observe certain articles of the instrument of 1856. "The question arises," Lord Granville continued, "not whether any desire expressed by Russia ought to be carefully examined in a friendly spirit by the co-signatory Powers, but whether they are to accept from her the announcement that by her own act, without any consent from them, she has released herself from a solemn covenant. I need scarcely say that her Majesty's Government have received this communication with deep regret, because it opens a discussion which might unsettle the cordial understanding it has been their earnest endeavour to maintain with the Russian Empire ; and for the above mentioned reasons it is impossible for her Majesty's Government to give any sanction on their part to the course announced by Prince Gortchakoff. If, instead of such a declaration, the Russian Government had addressed her Majesty's Government and the other Powers who are parties to the Treaty of 1856, and had proposed for consideration with them whether anything has occurred which could be held to amount to an infraction of the treaty, or whether there is anything in the terms which, from altered circumstances, presses with undue severity upon Russia, or which, in the course of events, has become unnecessary for the due protection of Turkey, her Majesty's Government would not have refused to examine the question in concert with the co-signatories of the treaty. Whatever might have been the result of such communications, a risk of future complication and a very dangerous precedent as to the validity of international obligations would have been avoided."

On the 20th of November Prince Gortchakoff replied to this Note as follows :—

"Our august Master had to discharge an imperious duty to his own country, without wishing to injure in any way the Governments which were signatories of the Treaty of 1856. On the contrary his Imperial Majesty appeals to their sense of justice and their regard to their own dignity. We regret to see that Lord Granville addresses himself principally to the form of our communications. The form was not our choice. We could have asked nothing better surely than to attain our end by an agreement with the signatories of the Treaty of 1856. But the principal Secretary of State of her Britannic Majesty well knows that the attempts made at different times to assemble the Powers in a

general Conference with a view to remove the causes of difficulty which disturbed the general peace have invariably failed. The prolongation of the present crisis, and the absence of a regular government in France postpone still further the possibility of such an agreement. Meanwhile the position in which the treaty left Russia has become more and more intolerable. Lord Granville will agree that the Europe of to-day is very far from being the Europe which signed the Treaty of 1856. It was impossible that Russia should agree to being the only Power bound indefinitely by an arrangement which, onerous as it was at the time when it was concluded, became daily weaker in its guarantees. Our august Master has too deep a sense of what he owes to his country to force it to submit any longer to an obligation against which the national sentiment protests. We cannot admit that the abrogation of a purely theoretical principle to which no immediate effect is given, and which simply restores to Russia a right of which no Great Power could consent to be deprived, should be considered as a menace to peace; or that in annulling one point of the Treaty of 1856 there is any implication that all are annulled. The Imperial Cabinet never had any such intention. On the contrary, our communication of October 19th (31st) declares in the most explicit terms that his Majesty the Emperor fully maintains his adhesion to the general principles of the Treaty of 1856, and that he is ready to come to an agreement with the signatory Powers of that treaty, either to confirm its general stipulations or to renew them, or to substitute for them any other equitable arrangement which may be thought suitable to secure the repose of the East and the equilibrium of Europe. There seems then to be no reason why the Cabinet of London should not, if it please, enter into an explanation with the signatories of the Treaty of 1856. For our part we are ready to join in any deliberation having for its object the settlement of guarantees for the consolidation of peace in the East. We are persuaded that fresh guarantees would be found in the removal of a permanent cause of irritation between the two Powers the most directly interested. Their mutual relations would be more firmly established on the basis of a good and solid understanding."

A few days later Prince Bismarck issued his invitations to the Conference, which the English Cabinet, after much deliberation, saw fit to accept. On November 28, Lord Granville wrote to Prince Gortchakoff, and, referring to his declaration that the Russian Government did not intend to give immediate application to its formal resumption of liberty in the Black Sea, wrote :—

"If these words are to be construed into an announcement that Russia has formed and stated her own opinion of her rights, but has no intention of acting in conformity with it without due concert with the other Powers, they go far to close the controversy in which the two Governments have been engaged. Her Majesty's Government have no objection to accept the invitation of Prussia to a Conference, upon the understanding that it is assembled without any foregone conclusion as to its results. In such case her Majesty's Government will be glad to consider with perfect fairness, and the respect due to a great and friendly Power, any proposals which Russia may have to make."

I.

(Page 210.)

THE promise of the Czar, referred to in the text, will be found embodied in the following despatch from Earl Granville to Lord A. Loftus:—

FOREIGN OFFICE, Jan. 8th, 1873.

“MY LORD,—Having received information from your Excellency and from Count Brunnow that Count Schouvalow, a statesman enjoying the full confidence of the Emperor of Russia, had left St Petersburg for London at the desire of his Imperial Majesty, I had the pleasure of receiving his Excellency on the 8th instant. He confirmed the fact that it was by the Emperor's desire that he sought a personal interview with me. It had caused great surprise to his Imperial Majesty to learn from various sources that a certain amount of excitement and susceptibility had been caused in this country on account of questions connected with Central Asia. The Emperor knew of no questions in Central Asia which could affect the good understanding between the two countries. It was true that no agreement has been come to as to some of the details of the arrangement concluded by Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortchakow on the basis of Mr Forsyth's recommendations as to the boundaries of Afghanistan; but the question ought not to be a cause to ruffle the good relations between the two countries. His Imperial Majesty had agreed to almost everything we had asked. There remained only one point regarding the provinces of Badakshan and Wakhan. There might be arguments used respectively by the departments of each Government, but the Emperor was of opinion that such a question should not be a cause of difference between the two countries, and his Imperial Majesty was determined it should not be so. He was the more inclined to carry out this determination in consequence of His Majesty's belief in the conciliatory policy of Her Majesty's Government. Count Schouvalow added on his own part that he had every reason to believe, if it were desired by Her Majesty's Government, the agreement might be arrived at at a very early period. With regard to the expedition to Khiva, it was true that it was decided upon for next spring. To give an

idea of its character it was sufficient to say that it would consist of four and a half battalions. Its object was to punish acts of brigandage, to recover fifty Russian prisoners, and to teach the Khan that such conduct on his part could not be continued with the impunity in which the moderation of Russia had led him to believe. Not only was it far from the intention of the Emperor to take possession of Khiva, but positive orders had been prepared to prevent it, and directions given that the conditions imposed should be such as could not in any way lead to a prolonged occupation of Khiva. Count Schouvalow repeated the surprise which the Emperor, entertaining such sentiments, felt at the uneasiness which it was said existed in England on the subject, and he gave the most decided assurance that I might give positive assurances to Parliament on this matter. With regard to the uneasiness which might exist in England on the subject of Central Asia, I could not deny the fact to Count Schouvalow; the people of this country were decidedly in favour of peace, but a great jealousy existed as to anything which really affected our honour and interest; that they were particularly alive to anything affecting India; that the progress of Russia had been considerable, and sometimes, as it would appear, like England in India, and France in Algeria, more so than was desired by the Central Governments; that the Clarendon and Gortchakow arrangements, apparently agreeable to both Governments, had met with great delay as to its final settlement; that it was with the object of coming to a settlement satisfactory to both countries, and in a friendly and conciliatory spirit, that I had addressed to your Excellency the despatch of the 17th October. The only point of difference which now remained, as Count Schouvalow had pointed out, concerned Badakshan and Wakhan. In our opinion, historical facts proved that these countries were under the domination of the Sovereign of Cabul, and we have acknowledged as much in the public documents; that, with regard to the expedition to Khiva, Count Schouvalow was aware that Lord Northbrook had given the strongest advice to the Khan to comply with the reasonable demands of the Emperor, and if the expedition were undertaken and carried out with the object and within the limits described by Count Schouvalow it would meet with no remonstrance from Her Majesty's Government, but it would undoubtedly excite public attention, and make the settlement of the boundary of Afghanistan more important for the object which both Governments had in view, viz., peace in Central Asia and good relations between the two countries. As to coming to a decision at an early date, it appeared to me desirable, inasmuch as

it would bear a different aspect if arrived at in the spirit with which both Governments were actuated, and not complicated by possible discussions raised in the British Parliament. I concluded by telling Count Schouvalow that I knew the confidence which was placed in him by the Emperor, and that I felt sure that my colleagues would agree with me in appreciating his visit to England, as a gratifying proof of the eminently conciliatory and friendly spirit with which the Emperor desired to settle without delay the question at issue. —I am, &c., &c.

(Signed) "GRANVILLE."

These are the first two articles of the treaty concluded between General Kauffmann, Governor-general of Turkestan, and the Ameer of Bokhara, signed Oct. 10, 1873 :—

"Art. I. The line of frontier between the dominions of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias and those of His Eminence the Ameer of Bokhara remains unaltered.

"All the Khivan territory on the right bank of the Amou Darya being now annexed to the Russian Dominions, the former frontier separating the possessions of the Ameer of Bokhara from the Khanate of Khiva, and stretching on the west from the locality called Khalata towards Gugertli 'Togai' on the right bank of Amou is abolished. The territory situated between the former Bokhara-Khivan frontier, the right bank of the Amou Darya from Gugertli to Meshekli 'Togai' inclusive, and the line passing from Meshekli to the point of junction of the former Bokhara-Khivan frontier with the frontier of the Russian Empire, are annexed to the dominions of the Ameer of Bokhara.

"Art. II. The right bank of the Amou Darya being detached from the Khanate of Khiva, all the caravan routes leading from Bokhara to the North into the Russian dominions traverse henceforth exclusively lands belonging to Bokhara and Russia."

J.

(Page 243.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS, April 30, 1881. On Mr Richard's motion concerning the action of our representatives abroad, Mr Gladstone said :—

“ . . . We have had raised on former occasions very interesting debates about the powers exercised by the executive Government without the direct authority of Parliament, and my hon. friend has gone back to the records of the 14th century or thereabouts, in which he was delighted to find that he was not original in the notion of an appeal to arbitration, but that our forefathers were beforehand with him at so remote a period. I may go a little further than he did, and say that in reading the records of those times I am struck in the main with the extreme good sense and practical turn of mind displayed by the chiefs of Government in those days—so struck that I often ask myself whether upon the whole, notwithstanding the progress made in many respects, and especially in the quality of good sense, and the higher elements of justice and humanity—the advance made by our race is so great as is supposed. The hon. member has referred to a class of cases not involved in the scope of the motion, in which the controversy is between the right of Parliament and the practice of the Executive Government, and he has quoted with approbation precedents of the direct intervention of Parliament in regard to the making of peace or war. The development of this empire and the changes that have taken place in our Constitution, though on the whole in favour of liberty, have by no means tended in every case to the increase of the control of Parliament over the administration of public affairs. Without doubt, in former times, and down to a period as late as the last century, Parliament had much more to say in matters of peace and war, and particularly in matters of treaty engagements, than it now has. But we must recollect what the Parliament was in those days ; it was virtually an assembly meeting with closed doors ; the people of this country were not cognizant in detail from day to day, or even from week to week, or month to month, of the proceedings of Parliament ; and Parliament could be used by the Crown as a Council to a considerable extent without incurring the tremendous inconvenience of disclosing to the whole world what you

were about, and, therefore, of defeating in any way the power to use our means and resources. But the augmentation of empire and the increase in the number of territories for which we are responsible have entirely altered our position in that respect, and above all the opening of the doors of Parliament to the people of this country and the communication of its proceedings, from moment to moment, to the whole world have disabled Parliament from doing that which in former times it might justly do, and which it was habitually to some extent called upon to do.

“ . . . The late Parliament was a Parliament of a very different composition and tendency from the present; but it derived its authority from the same source; and although I may say I abhorred a great deal of what it did, that Parliament had just as good a right in a constitutional sense to do all it did as we, the present House of Commons, have to act in conformity with our own convictions. I must go a little further. In justice to the late Government, I will say that I do not recollect one single instance in which a majority of that Parliament showed the slightest disposition to check the late Government; but I do recollect a great many instances in which they urged the Government to do more. Though I should have said that the control of the late Parliament was no control at all in reference to the proceedings of the late Government, I must say I felt on various occasions obliged to the late Government, because they did not do all the late Parliament wished them to do. There are many other cases. My hon. friend does not like annexations; but, I am sorry to say, annexations in many instances were forced on the Government by Parliament. I don't recollect any instance in which annexations made by the Government have been disapproved by Parliament. When the North-Western frontier of India was enlarged, the emphatic approval of the House of Commons was given to that enlargement. When the Island of Cyprus was in a certain sense acquired by proceedings as to which I have a decided opinion, which it is not necessary to utter, it was thoroughly and cordially approved by the Parliament that represented the people, and was elected under the same charter as we have been. I might go further back. During the time of the Government before the last there were some of the most benevolent and philanthropic agencies in this country that from time to time exhibited a very great disposition to press annexations on the Government. There was the annexation of the Fiji Islands. I was accustomed once a year to be besieged in this House by those who insisted on it. Going further back, the annexation of New

Zealand was not due to any proceedings of the local representatives of this country—it was not due to statesmen of either party in either House of Parliament, but to an action strictly popular, forcing it on the attention of the Government. I will take another instance—one which always seemed least justifiable of all the proceedings carried on in the British name within the last half-century, and that was the destruction of the fleet—it was called the piratical fleet—of the Rajah of Sarawak by Sir James Brooke. But it was challenged in Parliament by Mr Hume, who received a sort of isolated support from Mr Sidney Herbert and some others acting on a strongly conscientious conviction; but he was met by a very large majority indeed. It was one of the most unauthorized proceedings. My memory may have failed to take up other instances that may have occurred; but I must say during the last forty years I can only recollect one proceeding of the character my hon. friend reprobates as having been effected in a distant portion of the world by the representatives of this country, which was seriously and generally disapproved at home, and that was the annexation of Scinde. Scinde was annexed by Lord Ellenborough, under Sir Charles Napier, the commander-in-chief of the army on the Indus. That country was rapidly conquered and annexed, but the annexation was unanimously disapproved by the Conservative Cabinet of that day. I know not whether I speak without prejudice on the point, but the policy of annexation and aggression was at that time more uniformly and strongly discountenanced by the Conservatives than even by the Liberals. That, however, was an instance deemed generally by the country to be unjust, and certainly it was so deemed by the central authority. Besides, it could not be reversed without producing a greater amount of mischief than was involved in the recognition of the act.

“... You have now got undoubtedly, notwithstanding the complexity of your empire, the control of the central authority enormously increased. The responsibility of the central authority is, of course, increased also. I will not say this is an unmixed good, because unquestionably proceedings of a very complex nature, conducted through the medium of the telegraph, are more liable, I think, to miscarriages and mishaps than where the communications are of a more deliberate and regular character; still, upon the whole, the risk to which my hon. friend refers is diminished in a very great degree—I will not say it is infinitesimally small. The theatres of action that are not within the immediate reach of the telegraph are comparatively very limited; so that, upon the whole, my hon. friend may rest satis-

fied with the knowledge, at any rate, that the control of the central Government is now immensely increased by the action of the telegraph; almost from every principal centre of British territory abroad intelligence is transmitted in a time that may be counted by hours, instead of by weeks, and in some cases by months. I have in 1878 and on other former occasions stated, I think, very clearly what I conceive ought to be the guiding principles of the Executive Government in these matters. I think the Executive Government are bound in general terms to contract no treaties except such as they can contract compatibly with certain assurances on their own part—first, that they deem the engagement to be for the advantage of the country; and secondly, that they deem it to be one sufficiently within the knowledge and expectation of Parliament. With regard to the annexation of territory, I must say that no annexation of territory performed by an agent abroad is valid—it is mere waste paper until ratified at home, unless it was done in pursuance of authority from home, and if so done it has the seal and the stamp of the central authority. With regard to making war in the name of the nation, I may say it is impossible to take adequate security. What you really want is not merely the improvement of the machinery by which the central authority controls its extraneous agents, it is the improvement of the central authority itself. It is the formation of just habits of thought; it is that we should be more modest and less arrogant; it is that we should uniformly regard every other State and every other people as standing upon the same level of right as ourselves. It is that in the prosecution of our interest we shall not be so carried away by zeal as to allow it to make us for one moment forgetful of the equal claims and the equal rights of others. That is a very grave question indeed, and one upon which I am bound to say I believe the central authority is quite as much in need of self-discipline and self-restraint as its extraneous agents."

K.

(Page 274.)

*Parliamentary Papers: Greece. No. 2 (1881).**Lord Lyons to Earl Granville.*

"PARIS, December 22, 1880.—My Lord,—I made known to M. Barthélemy St Hilaire this afternoon, in the terms of the telegram which your Lordship did me the honour to address to me the day before yesterday, the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government with regard to his proposal that the Six Powers should convert their mediation on the Greek Frontier question into an arbitration. . . . I proceeded to ask him for explanations as to the principle and details of his proposal, and as to the reception it had met with from other Powers. M. Barthélemy St Hilaire began by telling me that Germany, Austria, Russia, and Italy had already signified to him their acceptance of his proposal in principle. Austria and Germany had accompanied their acceptance with a declaration that they were not in any way to be led on towards the adoption of coercive measures ; but France, M. Barthélemy St Hilaire said, was quite as determined as they were on this point ; indeed, it was of the essence of the arbitration that it was absolutely pacific. His Excellency proceeded to give me explanations, of which the substance was as follows :—His intention is not that the Powers shall offer their arbitration to the contending parties, but that Turkey and Greece shall be brought to ask for it. The condition *sine quâ non* is that each of the two countries shall bind itself, absolutely and unreservedly beforehand, to abide by the decision of the Powers, whatever that decision may be. M. Barthélemy St Hilaire has already written to the French Representatives at Constantinople and Athens to explain this plan to them, and to authorise them, within certain limits, to use, if occasion serves, language calculated to promote the acceptance of it. If he receives the adhesion of England, as he has already received that of Austria, Germany, Italy, and Russia, he will send more formal instructions to the French Ambassador at Constantinople to take steps to induce the Porte to refer the questions between itself and Greece to the arbitration of the Powers. He will also instruct the French Representatives

in London, Berlin, Rome, St Petersburg, and Vienna to request that directions may be sent to the Representatives of the other Powers at the Porte to act in concert with the French Ambassador for the same purpose. M. Barthélemy St Hilaire thinks that the Porte may be induced to refer the matter to arbitration by the conviction it must feel that the arbitrators cannot but come to a decision more favourable to it than that of the Conference. . . . Supposing the two parties to have agreed to the arbitration, the time will then come to settle details as to the mode in which it shall be executed. M. Barthélemy St Hilaire does not conceive that another formal Conference will be either necessary or advisable. He supposes that the Powers will be able to come to an agreement as to their award by ordinary diplomatic communications with each other. It has occurred to him that, as a proof of their sincerity, and as a security against all chance of collision, Turkey and Greece might each withdraw its troops to a certain distance within its present frontier. Afterwards, when the definitive frontier had been settled by the award of the Six Powers, it might be marked out in the space thus left free, by Commissioners deputed by them for the purpose. Having given me these explanations, M. Barthélemy St Hilaire said that he had sent instructions to the French Ambassador in London, which would enable him to express the views of the French Government in detail to your Lordship. He concluded by expressing an earnest hope that the concert of Europe would soon be made complete by the adhesion of Great Britain to the plan now adopted by France and the other four Powers. I imagine that the acceptance of Austria, Germany, Russia, and Italy has been made by all of them, more or less explicitly dependent (1) upon the adhesion of the Six Great Powers without any exception : and (2) upon the absolute engagement both of Turkey and Greece to be bound by the award of the Arbitrators. I understand that Russia has laid especial stress upon this last point, as one necessary to the dignity of the Governments."

M. Barthélemy St Hilaire to the Comte de Moüy.

"PARIS, le 28 Décembre 1880.—M. le Comte,—Depuis la guerre glorieuse de l'Indépendance, voilà soixante ans, jusqu'au Congrès de Berlin en 1878 et jusqu'à la Conférence du mois de Juin dernier, la France n'a pas cessé de prodiguer à la Grèce les témoignages de l'intérêt le plus sincère et de la sympathie la plus efficace. Ses conseils ne peuvent être suspects, même quand ils risquent de déplaire ; ils sont toujours d'une

indiscutable loyauté; et notre devoir de donner des conseils amicaux, dussent-ils n'être pas suivis, est d'autant plus étroit qu'ils peuvent être plus utiles et que les circonstances où nous les offrons sont plus graves. En ce moment le Gouvernement Hellénique n'interprète pas bien le principe sur lequel il prétend appuyer ses revendications à main armée; et il confère, soit à l'Article XXIV du Traité de Berlin, soit aux décisions de la Conférence du mois de Juin 1880, une valeur et une portée qu'ils n'ont pas. Dans ces deux assemblées, les Puissances n'ont voulu être et n'ont été que médiatrices; leur intention a été de faciliter les négociations entre les parties intéressées; elles ne voulaient point aller et ne sont point allées au delà. Elles n'ont pas prononcé une sentence exécutoire, comme le Gouvernement Grec le pense, et il n'a pas le droit de prendre par la force ce qui ne lui a pas été concédé par le légitime propriétaire. L'Europe ne pouvait pas disposer de la Crète, de l'Épire, et la Thessalie, qu'elle ne possède pas; mais elle a simplement conseillé à la Grèce et à la Turquie de s'entendre sur une délimitation des frontières nouvelles, qu'elle s'est bornée à indiquer comme la plus pratique, sans avoir à la transférer en toute propriété à l'une des parties en l'arrachant à l'autre. Comme, dans la question actuelle, ce point est de la dernière importance, nous y insisterons en tâchant de le mettre ici dans toute sa clarté. D'abord, il faut bien savoir ce qu'est la médiation proprement dite et l'on comprendra mieux alors l'œuvre de la Conférence de Berlin. La plus haute autorité dans les questions de cet ordre dit expressément:— 'La médiation, dans laquelle un ami commun interpose ses bons offices, se trouve souvent efficace pour engager les parties contendantes à se rapprocher, à s'entendre, ou à transiger de leurs droits. Le médiateur doit garder une exacte impartialité. . . . Il est conciliateur et non pas Juge; sa vocation est de procurer la paix. . . . Le médiateur n'est pas garant du traité qu'il a ménagé, s'il n'en a pas pris expressément la garantie.' (Vattel, 'Droit des Gens,' tome II., p. 304, section 328, seconde édition.) C'est là exactement ce qu'a fait la Conférence de Berlin, et elle ne pouvait pas faire davantage en sa qualité de médiatrice. Elle a essayé de concilier les parties en consentant à leur indiquer de quelle façon elles pourraient s'entendre; son mandat s'est renfermé dans ces limites; d'aucune manière, elle n'a garanti le Traité qu'elle proposait. Nous reconnaissons que, dès les premiers moments où la décision de la Conférence a été connue, le Gouvernement Hellénique a interprété les choses tout autrement, et que, d'puis lors, il a persévéré dans l'interprétation erronée qu'il leur donnait. Au mois de Juillet dernier, quelques jours à peine après la clôture de la

Conférence, il a appelé les réserves de son armée, comme pour se mettre immédiatement, '*manu militari*,' en possession de territoires qui lui auraient été définitivement acquis. Les Puissances justement inquiètes de cette résolution, se sont empressées de calmer, autant qu'elles l'ont pu, ce mouvement que rien ne justifiait ; et le Gouvernement Grec a consenti à ralentir ses préparatifs, sinon à les arrêter, comme il l'aurait dû. Mais depuis que l'affaire de Dulcigno a été terminée, la Grèce a repris ses armements avec un redoublement d'activité et sur la plus vaste échelle, puisqu'on parle de porter les troupes jusqu'au chiffre énorme de 80,000 hommes. Le but hautement proclamé de ces armements est une guerre à la Turquie si elle s'oppose, ainsi que tout le fait présager, à l'occupation des territoires en litige. La Grèce doit donc se l'avouer ; elle n'a pas le droit pour elle, et l'agression qu'elle médite ne sera qu'une atteinte toute gratuite au Droit des Gens. Elle n'est pas même menacée par la Turquie, car la Porte Ottomane ne fait que se mettre en défense contre une attaque qu'on annonce à bref délai. Elle pense si peu à recourir la première à la force qu'elle propose d'ouvrir des négociations nouvelles et d'éviter ainsi un conflit sanglant, qu'elle réproouve sans le craindre, et qu'elle dénonce aux nations civilisées dans sa note du 15 Décembre. Les conséquences de l'attaque qui se prépare pourront être redoutables autant que le principe sur lequel elle s'appuie est insuffisant et faux. La Grèce ne peut pas se flatter que la guerre qui éclatera sur les frontières de l'Epire et de la Thessalie soit exclusivement confinée à ces contrées. Dans l'état où est aujourd'hui toute la presqu'île des Balkans, il n'est pas douteux que la guerre gagnera de proche en proche, et que l'incendie, si difficilement éteint en 1878, ne se rallume avec une intensité presque irrésistible. De quel oeil les Puissances de l'Europe pourront-elles regarder ces désordres ? Pense-t-on qu'elles demeureront impassibles en face de perturbations qui peuvent si aisément les gagner elles-mêmes ? Que devient la paix générale et le concert Européen, qui, depuis plus de deux années, a pu la maintenir ? La Grèce pense-t-elle que ce soit un moyen de témoigner à l'Europe la gratitude qu'elle lui doit que de déchaîner de pareils fléaux sur l'humanité ? Que ferait donc la Grèce, si, au lieu de méditer l'attaque, elle avait à la repousser, et à se défendre contre d'iniques agresseurs ? Même fût-elle victorieuse, ce qui est peu vraisemblable, qui peut répondre de ce qu'elle deviendrait avec tous les pays limitrophes, dans une conflagration universelle, dont le résultat est absolument incalculable ? Ce sont là des considérations que doivent bien peser les hommes d'Etat de la Grèce ; elles sont de nature à les retenir sur la

route funeste où une première faute les entraîne, et où chaque jour les pousse de plus en plus. Nous ne nous dissimulons pas qu'à cette heure, après les engagements de toute sorte qu'on a pris, il est bien difficile de cesser ce qu'on a commencé, avec plus de précipitation que de dessein réfléchi. Mais plus on marche dans la voie fatale où l'on est entré, plus on descend la pente qui mène infailliblement à l'abîme. Au cas d'un désastre, la Grèce peut-elle espérer que l'Europe, dont les avertissements répétés auraient été méconnus, vole à son secours ? L'Europe même serait-elle alors unanime dans sa sympathie pour une grande infortune comme elle l'est aujourd'hui dans ses conseils et ses appels réitérés à la sagesse des Hellènes ? Personne ne saurait en répondre, et le doute tout au moins est permis. La Grèce, non justifiée dans ce qu'elle appelle son droit, s'épuisant par des dépenses hors de toute proportion avec ses ressources, désapprouvée par l'Europe, qui ne veut pas la guerre, la Grèce ne peut sortir des embarras qu'elle s'est suscités que par la démarche qu'on lui conseille de faire auprès des Puissances ainsi qu'on la conseille à la Porte Ottomane. C'est de demander leur arbitrage pour terminer le différend, qui dure depuis deux ans et demi, et qui ne peut plus être tranché directement par de nouvelles négociations après celles qui ont échoué à Prevesa et à Constantinople. Cet arbitrage, si on l'obtient, permettrait à la Grèce de suspendre les armements excessifs qui la ruinent, puisque l'Europe aurait consenti à régler elle-même le destin des populations Helléniques, qui pourraient s'en fier à sa sollicitude. L'arbitrage est toute autre chose que la médiation, et voici encore ce qu'en dit Vattel (*Id. ibid.*, p. 305, section 329) :— 'Quand les Souverains ne peuvent convenir sur leurs prétentions, et qu'ils désirent cependant de maintenir, ou de rétablir la paix, ils confient quelquefois la décision de leurs différends à des arbitres, choisis d'un commun accord. Dès que le compromis est lié, les parties doivent se soumettre à la sentence des arbitres ; elles s'y sont engagées et la foi des Traités doit être gardée.' C'est là précisément le cas de la Grèce et de la Turquie, et leur intérêt à toutes les deux est si évident qu'on a quelque peine à comprendre qu'elles hésitent à adopter pour vider leur différend le moyen qu'ont pris naguère la Grande Bretagne et les Etats-Unis pour régler l'affaire de 'l'Alabama.' L'objection la plus spécieuse que la Grèce puisse opposer à cette sage résolution, recommandée par un exemple venant de si haut et si récent, c'est qu'elle ne peut accepter rien qui soit moindre que ce qui lui a été promis par la Conférence de Berlin. Déjà on a répondu à cette objection en faisant voir qu'elle ne repose sur aucun fondement, et que jamais les Puissances médiatrices n'ont accordé à la Grèce le droit de se saisir à force

ouverte des territoires qui ne lui ont pas été légitimement concédés. Cette objection, si l'on continue à vouloir s'en servir, ne répond absolument qu'à des exigences d'amour-propre, et les nations doivent se garder de ces illusions égoïstes tout autant que les individus. A bien regarder les choses, que peut-on craindre sérieusement d'un arbitrage, qui serait d'ailleurs si honorable et si utile pour la Grèce comme pour la Porte Ottomane ? On craint une seule chose, c'est que la délimitation nouvelle ne comprît une moindre étendue que la précédente. Mais il ne faut pas se borner à cette crainte vague et tout-à-fait indéterminée ; il faut examiner la différence probable des deux délimitations, avec toute la précision possible en une telle matière ; il faut apprécier, avec une approximation rigoureuse, ce que perdrait la Grèce à une décision qui lui serait, à ce que l'on présume, moins favorable que l'autre. Autant qu'on peut en juger, la Grèce, d'après l'avis de la Conférence de Berlin, recevrait un agrandissement de 20,000 kilom. carrés. Peut-on croire que la sentence arbitrale à intervenir réduisit de plus de 2,000 ou 3,000 kilom. carrés cette part considérable ? Est-il à supposer que la différence pût être plus grande ? Et ce serait pour une réduction aussi légère que la Grèce irait livrer aux hasards d'une guerre ses destinées d'abord, puis celles de l'Europe et le maintien de la paix générale ? Nous avouons que nous ne pouvons nous résigner à cette douloureuse perspective. La Grèce doit se dire que dans la guerre qui a fini au début de 1877 elle n'avait joué aucun rôle, qu'elle n'était pas matériellement prête à en jouer un de quelque importance, qu'elle n'a pas eu à verser une goutte de sang, et qu'elle n'a pas été forcée de dépenser une drachme. Il est vrai qu'elle s'est rendue au désir des Puissances qui l'ont invitée à ne pas se mêler à la lutte. Aussi les Puissances ont-elles reconnu cette condescendance en permettant à la Grèce d'être entendue au Congrès de Berlin dans les questions qui la touchaient directement ; aussi les Puissances ont-elles consenti tout exprès pour la Grèce exclusivement à réunir cette année même la Conférence de Berlin et à offrir un avis conciliateur ; enfin, aussi les Puissances sont-elles disposées, nous nous permettons de le croire, à rendre l'arbitrage, s'il a lieu, aussi favorable à la Grèce qu'il sera possible. Il nous semble donc que, toute compensation faite, la part du royaume Hellénique sera toujours bien belle, puisqu'il s'accroîtra des deux cinquièmes environ de ce qu'il est aujourd'hui. C'est un résultat que nous regardons comme infaillible, et il nous semble qu'il mérite d'être accepté, sans compter qu'il assurerait au monde l'inappréciable bienfait de la paix. Que si toutes ces raisons puissantes qu'il s'adressent à la magnanimité et à la sagesse du peuple Hellénique

et de son Gouvernement ne les touchent pas, le monde civilisé n'aura plus qu'à leur laisser l'entière et lourde responsabilité des événements formidables 'que nous prévoyons et que nous aurions vainement essayé de prévenir."

Lord Lyons to Earl Granville,

"PARIS, *January 14, 1881.*—My Lord,—This morning, in obedience to the instruction contained in your Lordship's despatch of the day before yesterday, I spoke to M. Barthélemy St Hilaire of his despatch of the 7th instant" [contesting the right of Greece to take up arms on the sanction of the Berlin Congress and Conference]. "I said to his Excellency that your Lordship had desired me to point out to him that, in that despatch, he appeared to have adopted the Turkish arguments, in opposition to those which had all along been used by the Representatives at Constantinople, including up to a recent date the French Ambassador ; and I reminded him of the collective note of the 25th August, in which the Representatives had declared to the Porte that the Powers could not consent to reopen the question of the line of frontier, but must abide by the decision of the Conference at Berlin. I proceeded to observe that Her Majesty's Government desired to make quite sure that their attitude in regard to his Excellency's proposal of arbitration was exactly understood by him, and that, if he would allow me, I would recite to him the substance of communications on the subject which had been made by your Lordship to the French Embassy in London. On the 31st of last month your Lordship had, I said, told M. d'Aunay, the Secretary of the Embassy, who had come to you on behalf of M. Challemeil-Lacour, that telegraphic instructions had been sent to Her Majesty's Representatives at Constantinople and Athens to support the French proposal, basing their arguments not only on the general objections to a war, the necessity for which might be peacefully avoided, but also on the particular risk and danger to Turkey and Greece of war, and even preparations for war, in the present case. I mentioned the three reservations which your Lordship had, at the same time, stated to M. d'Aunay : that is to say (1) that, in supporting the French proposal of arbitration, Her Majesty's Government did not consider the position changed with regard to the decisions of the Congress and Conference of Berlin ; (2) that Her Majesty's Government must retain their liberty of action as arbitrators in case the arbitration was held, and that, at the present time, they had come

to no foregone conclusion ; (3) that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, Greece could not be considered to have lost the position she previously held as to the frontier assigned to her in case he was unwilling to accede to the new proposal. I added that your Lordship had explained to M. d'Aunay that you had made these reservations in order that they might be known to the French Government, but that you should not communicate them to the Greek Government for fear of their injuring the present negotiations. I went on to say that, on the 10th instant, your Lordship had authorised Her Majesty's Minister at Athens to take part in a collective and simultaneous representation, which had been proposed by his French colleague, if the other Powers also took part in it. Your Lordship had added a caution, not to be mentioned to the Greek Government, that Her Majesty's Minister should not commit himself to any arguments which would imply an abandonment of Greece if she refused to accept the arbitration. I added that your Lordship had told M. Challemel-Lacour that this caution had been given in consequence of your having observed that the arguments used by the French Minister at Athens with regard to the decisions of the Congress and Conference of Berlin resembled those which had hitherto been used by the Turks, and which had been combated by the Representatives of the Powers at Constantinople. Having listened patiently and attentively, M. Barthélemy St Hilaire said . . . with regard to the arguments in his despatch he could not help thinking that they were sound and valid, whether they had been previously used by the Turks or not. He went on to say that he was pushing the arbitration proposal vigorously at Constantinople. He was convinced that his original idea of obtaining the consent of the Porte first of all was the correct one. He found the Turks very reasonable, and did not despair of succeeding with them in a short time. This being the case, he had determined to suspend operations for the moment at Athens, in the hope that he might resume them with an announcement that the consent of the Turks had been already given. He had accordingly set aside, for the present, the idea of a collective representation on the part of the Representatives at Athens, and had instructed M. de Mouly to hold his hand for the moment, to foster the good-will of his colleagues in the matter, but to abstain from asking them to present a note or take any other active steps immediately. M. Barthélemy St Hilaire told me that he had communicated confidentially to the Representatives at Paris of Turkey and of Greece, as well as to those of the Five Great

Powers, his three recent papers on the Greek question—that is to say, his despatches of the 24th and 28th ultimo, and of the 7th instant.”

The despatch of December 24, referred to in the last sentence, was a Circular Note to the French representatives abroad, in which the Foreign Minister at great length, and with extreme vigour, not to say emotion, pointed out the grave dangers to be apprehended from a war between Turkey and Greece.

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